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PORTRAITS OF THE SURVIVORS.

[*Frontispiece.*

80

THE WRECK OF THE NISERO,

AND

OUR CAPTIVITY IN SUMATRA.

BY

W. BRADLEY,
ONE OF THE SURVIVORS

London:
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON,
CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET.
1884.

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PREFACE.

THE *Nisero* was wrecked on the coast of Sumatra in November, 1883, and the captivity of her crew threatened at one time to give rise to serious political complications. Thanks to the efforts made by our Government, we were eventually released.

The following account of our sufferings and adventures is from the diary I kept during our detention.

Our ship was an iron screw-steamer, of 1818 tons gross, 1182 tons net, built by Turnbull and Son at Whitby in 1878, and launched in August of that year. Her dimensions were: length, 271 feet 6 inches; breadth, 34 feet 9 inches; depth, 24 feet 1 inch. She had a poop and forecastle, the first of 28 feet, the second of 35 feet. She had two decks, and was fitted with four bulkheads. Her engines were by Blair and Co., of Stockton, and were of the compound inverted description, with two cylinders, working up to 78 lbs. on the square inch, and estimated at 150 horse-power.

Gilchrist 19 Nov. 1921 Copies.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE.

PAGE

The ship—The Red Sea—Aground—Heavy storm—Under charter—Bali Straits 1

CHAPTER II.

THE WRECK.

Land ahead—The ship ashore—The boats—Provisioning under difficulties—Farewell ceremony—The island . 8

CHAPTER III.

PONGAH.

The crew—The natives—A present—The second mate's watch—The Chief of Pongah—Our first hut—The Rajah of Tenom—Visits to the wreck—Fate of our pets—The steward's nightmare—The cook cross-examined—Our dangerous position—Disposition of the natives—Our destination 13

CHAPTER IV.

LOWER TENOM.

PAGE

The start for Tenom—Through the plantations—The jungle—The passage of the swamp—Accident to the second engineer—Fording the creek—Steamers in sight—A snake-hunt—Messengers in disguise—Letters from the Dutch—Return of the rajah 30

CHAPTER V.

UPPER TENOM.

Journey from Lower Tenom—New quarters—The Bird-cage—The rajah's nephews—Religious observances—How a hut is built—The musical boxes—Alarm as to a lion—Arrival of the Chinaman—First appearance of Tuku-Yet—Captain Roura—A consultation—Buffaloes—Bathing—The rajah's notion of costume—A war-dance—White Cap—The Chinaman again—The Rajah of Rigas—Canoeing under difficulties—Increased demands—The captain, second engineer, and Chinese cook sent to negotiate—The captain does not return—Christmas Day—Two blue-jackets drowned—Illness of the mate 42

CHAPTER VI.

THE BOMBARDMENT.

Stores arrive—Return of the man-of-war to Singapore—Tenom bombarded by the Dutch—Our hurried departure—Nicholas's escape—Pepper Hill—Flight of the rajah—Through the forest again—The paddi-barn—Spudd Hill—Bombardment resumed—Our monkey—A scare—Illness of the second mate—General sickness—The monkey liberated—Another move—Unexpected result of the second mate's pantomime—Improving our hut 58

CHAPTER VII.

ANT HILL.

PAGE

Our division of labour—Chief steward ill—The water—The Union Jack demanded—Proposals for escape—Two men set out—Their adventures and return—News from the *Pegasus*—Captain Bickford and Mr. Maxwell—Stores at last—Newspapers arrive—Another letter from Mr. Maxwell—Robbery of the stores—The *Pegasus* goes away—Loscocco falls ill—Another move. 73

CHAPTER VIII.

SANDY ISLAND.

Tuku-Yet returns—Death of Loscocco—His burial—Tuku-Yet goes to Tenom—Reported offer from the Dutch—My own illness—The Waylah men—Our amusements—Cricket—Pebble-polishing—Easter—A pistol-shot—An elephant-hunt—Great storm—Visitors—Return of the *Pegasus*—The river overflows—Stores arrive in abundance—Death of Fowler—Letters—Death of Wells—Attempt to escape—Three men get away—Captured—A new house—The rajah refuses to let us go—Death of Armstrong 86

CHAPTER IX.

THE PARTY DIVIDED.

Burning of our old house—Curious native custom—Chief engineer taken ill—Native funeral—Method of burial—Death of Gerraty—Waylah men attempt to release us—Preparations to receive them—Funeral of Pan Chute's wife—Paddi-stamping—Snakes killed—Wild pigs 102

CHAPTER X.

THE MONTH OF PRAYER.

PAGE

The party united again—The rajah and the conjurer—The feast—Our diving-raft—More letters—Squally weather—Our duties—The crosses for the graves—Kindness of Tuku-Yet's krani—Forbidden to visit the cemetery—The quarrel about the bananas—The rajah attacks me—The raft cut adrift—Summoned to an audience—We decline—The rajah changes his tactics—Box from the *Pegasus*—A sailor delirious—A monkey-hunt 110

CHAPTER XI.

NEGOTIATIONS.

The New Year of the Malays—Tuku-Yet arrives—Our large cross finished—Rajah Omoh arrives—Portrait-drawing—The rajah declines to send us to Acheen—A little music—Visitors from Bubun—The Rajah of Bubun—Stores from Analaboe—Men-of-war at Bubun—The conditions of ransom—Tuku-Yet arrives—His influence—Murray falls ill—Death of Bibby—Death of Murray 124

CHAPTER XII.

TUKU-YET'S DIPLOMACY.

The suspended lemon—No news—The last offer—Seven of us visit Upper Tenom—Changes due to the bombardment—Etam Abis—Anxiety of the rajah—Erection of more crosses—Tuku-Yet's report—The Italian goes to Tenom—The war-ships off Tenom—Heavy firing—The Rajah of Kotapang-passir—Our rajah's mother intervenes 135

CHAPTER XIII.

FREEDOM AT LAST.

PAGE

Preparations—Upper Tenom—Our escort—Crossing the river—The rajah again excited—Back at the palace—Visit from the Chief of Pongah—Our last look at the *Nisero*—The Konsaby—A huge canoe—A cart—A breakfast in the bush—Five men set free—The native women—Rajah Apanama—The last day of captivity—Friends—Our welcome—Safe on board the *Pegasus*—A word of thanks 145

CHAPTER XIV.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

Olehleh—The Governor of Acheen—A testimonial for us—Arrival at Penang—Our quarters in the hospital—Photographed—References to the Frontispiece—Departure in the *Ajax*—Our voyage home—Conclusion 159

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

Portraits of the Survivors . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Penang, in the Straits of Malacca 5
Pongah, on the coast of Sumatra, where the *Nisero* was wrecked, November 8, 1883 17
Yapatee, the Chief of Pongah 18
Native Canoe, Stick, and Paddle 31
Implements of War 52
Battahs—Natives of the Interior 63
Our House in the Forest 80
Sandy Island 87
Monuments of those who died 103
Instrument for crushing paddi 107
Cemetery of the Seven who died 133
Interior of Hut, with Frames of Sleeping-Bunks . . 138
Native Implements 140
The *Nisero*, as seen Ten Months after she got ashore . 150
H.M.S. *Pegasus* 157
The General Hospital at Penang 160
Invalids of the *Nisero* Crew in the Hospital at Penang . 162

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57

THE WRECK OF THE "NISERO."

CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE.

The ship—The Red Sea—Aground—Heavy storm—Under charter—Bali Straits.

At 8 a.m. on Saturday, the 2nd of June, 1883, the steamship *Nisero*, of Sunderland, came into Clover and Clayton's Dock at Birkenhead to undergo a few repairs. Her owners, Messrs. Pinkney and Sons, had purchased her about two years before, when her name was the *Fifty-Nine*. She was called the *Fifty-Nine*, I was given to understand, owing to her having been the fifty-ninth ship launched by her builders.

Hearing that the third engineer was about to leave, I applied for the vacancy to the firm's consulting engineer, who came on board about 9 o'clock, and, after a little conversation, I obtained his promise that I should have the berth. On the Tuesday I joined her. About noon we left the dry dock, and went to our moorings in Huskisson Dock, Liverpool. On the

Friday we signed articles for a voyage not to exceed two years.

The next day, in moving from Huskisson Dock into Canada Dock, we stove in our cutwater against the pier-head. On the Monday, the repairs having been executed, we anchored in the river; and on Tuesday, the 12th of June, we got under way about 1 o'clock in the morning to adjust our compasses, and two hours later we started full steam ahead. At 7 o'clock we discharged the pilot and a couple of the captain's friends, and at half-past 6 o'clock in the evening we were off Holyhead and fairly started on our voyage to Penang.

We made all haste down the Mediterranean and through the Canal, and left Suez on the 30th of June. Three days afterwards, while steaming gaily down the Red Sea, under intense heat, we hove-to at 6 a.m. to take adrift our high-pressure steam casing cover, which was leaking very badly. This cover was close up against our boiler-room door, and the work of unshipping it was very difficult—the heat and the gases from the boiler-room being unbearable for any length of time.

Before I had finished I was almost choked and speechless, and, not being able to resist the temptation, I took a large draught of water. This completely knocked me up. I was barely able to get out on deck and throw myself in the shade of one of the boats,

when I lost all consciousness. At first no one noticed me, thinking, I suppose, that it was a case of fatigue. However, as I afterwards learnt, I put out my hand and tried to speak, and the man at the wheel, seeing something was wrong, called the attention of the mate, who tried to ascertain what I wanted. Just then the captain appeared, and, finding what was the matter, sent off for some brandy.

I was unconscious for three or four hours. One of the firemen had also a narrow escape; and on the Thursday the mess-room steward and a sailor had a similar attack, the steward being unconscious for several hours, and the sailor having a touch of sunstroke.

On the 7th of July, when near the Twelve Apostles, and seven days out from Suez, the ship grounded on a sandbank. I had gone on watch at midnight, and about three quarters of an hour afterwards the vessel gave three or four heavy bumps, and the engines, which were going full speed a minute before, nearly pulled up short. Attempts were made to drive her off by putting the engines going astern and then reversing, but to no effect.

We then got the boats out in readiness, in case we had to abandon her. Fortunately she had selected a sandbank to ground on. Had it been otherwise, we should have had small chance of escaping alive, as it took near an hour and a half to get the first boat

out. At last all the boats were launched, and then the men set to with all the tools we could muster to heave overboard the greater part of the coal on the starboard deck, as she had listed to that side. We had a couple of hundred tons there, and we cleared nearly half of it before she righted. Just then another outward-bound vessel hove in sight, *The City of Venice,* and our captain went on board. On his return we tried what we could do with the engines going, and about noon we got the ship off.

On the Sunday the boatswain was disrated to ordinary seaman, and the mess-room steward also sent before the mast for laziness. The chief steward had already been reduced to cook—after having been put in irons—and now he was further reduced to common seaman for incompetency.

The next day we ran into a heavy storm. Everything fore and aft was saturated with salt-water. The deck was strewn with flying-fish of various colours and sizes. The ship was hove-to with the rudder lashed up, and the engines working dead slow. On the Tuesday the storm continued unabated. One of the stowaway boys—there were three on board, who had first emerged from the chain-locker after we were clear of Holyhead—had a narrow escape. He was standing outside the galley door when she shipped a heavy sea, which carried him head first into the galley amongst the pots, pans, and coals. He had scarcely

regained his feet before she put another monster into the galley after him, and this took him out at the other door, and but for his getting foul of a rope, which he clung to, he would inevitably have been swept overboard. The coals that remained on deck were all cleared off by this storm, which continued till the

Penang, in the Straits of Malacca.

following Wednesday. I had heard tell of mountainous waves, and then first realized the meaning of the expression. The spray of some of those that surrounded us went several feet above the main-yard.

We reached Penang at 8 o'clock in the evening of the 22nd of July, and ran into harbour the next morning. The disrated boatswain, who had been in irons for three

days, was here handed over to the police. He was brought before the magistrate, and the case was decided in his favour. His wages were paid up to date, and he received his discharge papers. Several other changes in the crew afterwards took place.

We left Penang for Singapore, and arrived there on the 26th of July. From Singapore we went to Batavia, and thence to Samarang, and so on to Soerabaya, where the last of our cargo was discharged. We left Soerabaya for Rangoon on the 18th of August, having been chartered for three months by a Chinese merchant in Singapore to trade in rice. Having called at Singapore and Penang, we returned to Rangoon, and after another passage along the coast the charter terminated, and we left for Batavia. On the 11th of October we steamed out of Batavia for Cherribon, and thence we returned to Soerabaya to load, I understood for Marseilles.

We finally left Soerabaya on Sunday, the 28th of October. Three days afterwards we were making very fair progress through Bali Straits, the scenery of which on both sides is very interesting, and the straits are so narrow that the objects on shore are plainly visible without glasses. During our passage we saw an immense variety of fish round about the ship, and one species something like the dog-fish was very largely represented. We found the sea strewn with floating lava from the late eruption, and several of us secured

some good pieces as curiosities, by means of an old coal-basket fastened to the fall end of one of the ship's ropes.

Up to Wednesday, the 7th of November, all had gone well with us, and then, strange to relate, it was suddenly ascertained that we were rather short of coals, our superiors being of opinion that we had not enough on board to justify our making direct for Point de Galle. And so the ship was put about for Acheen Head, where it was expected the necessary quantity could be obtained.

CHAPTER II.

THE WRECK.

Land ahead—The ship ashore—The boats—Provisioning under difficulties—Farewell ceremony—The island.

About 8 o'clock on the evening of Thursday, the 8th of November, 1883, I turned into my bunk, to get a couple of hours' rest, as I had to go on watch at twelve midnight. I was just on the point of falling asleep when the violent ringing of the engine-room telegraph roused me to a sense of something being seriously wrong outside. In a second or two I was on deck, never having left my berth so smartly before. What was my surprise, on looking over the starboard gunwale, to behold land ahead! We had been bearing right stem on to it, at full speed, but a couple of seconds before! My first impression on hearing the telegraph was that we were being run foul of by some other vessel, and such, as I afterwards heard, was the first thought that struck almost all hands. The idea of land never occurred to me, as we did not expect to make Acheen before the morning.

The engines were reversed as quickly as possible, but it was too late. At the time the order was received below, the *Nisero* could not have been more than from three to four lengths from where she struck. In this short distance she had answered to her helm a little, but not much. All attempts to float her again were out of the question. She was obviously a doomed ship. At the time of the disaster the weather was very thick and misty ahead. Even after we had grounded we could not ascertain the nature of the shore. All that could be seen was a background of trees, apparently springing from a sunken island.

Seeing that we could do nothing towards saving the ship, we tried to save our lives, and after drawing the fires from the furnaces, all hands set to work to get the starboard boats adrift and launched.

The two boats on the weather or port side were unapproachable, owing to the ship having listed over. The surf, which was very heavy, had already commenced the work of their destruction, and in less than an hour both were total wrecks. At first we failed to move the starboard life-boat, owing to the defective gearing and the heavy list the ship had taken; and we turned our attention to the smaller boat on the bridge. It was soon got out and lowered, with the third officer and one man in her to prevent her smashing herself against the ship's side. The question then arose, should we make two journeys ashore with the small

boat, or should we have another try at the life-boat?

The chances of the small boat getting back safely were not very great; and had anything happened, the few hands left on board would have stood but a poor chance of succeeding with the other. It was resolved therefore to have another try. We accordingly mustered round her, and began a severe struggle to get her free. We had many difficulties to overcome, the worst being the heavy surf which was washing clean over, and sweeping every movable article off the deck. At last our efforts were rewarded by seeing the boat swing over the side. A couple of minutes afterwards she was safely afloat. We had a little difficulty in lowering her, owing to our heavy list; but my bed came in handy as a fender, and she was put over all right. To do this took about two hours; under proper circumstances it should have taken about five minutes.

We had next to provision the boats. This was another hazardous undertaking, as all the stores were kept aft, and it was no easy matter to get along decks inclined at an angle of about forty-five degrees. During the operation I was unfortunate in getting knocked down on the poop deck, and having my forehead cut rather severely against a stanchion. I, however, clung to the stanchion, and by so doing saved myself from going over the weather rail.

Having provisioned the boats, we proceeded to man

them under the captain's orders. The second officer was told off to take charge of the small boat, in which were the chief engineer, third officer, and six men. The captain, chief officer, second engineer, myself, and the remaining portion of our company went in the life-boat. The captain and chief officer were the last to leave the ship; before doing so the captain put the question, "Am I justified, in the opinion of all hands, in leaving this ship?"

"Yes, sir," we all answered.

"You are sure you mean what you say?" said the captain.

"Yes, sir."

"Only, on a later date, don't go and make another statement," continued the captain; and we gave no reply.

The lifeboat was the first to shove off; and at starting we lost our rudder. All directions for the handling of the boat emanated from our captain, who took sole charge. With careful, steady work on the part of the captain and oarsmen, we soon had the pleasure of feeling the boat strike on a sandy beach. All hands jumped out, waist deep into the water, and laid hold on the boat to haul her up, as each of the surf rollers struck her. At first she got away, but she was again washed in further down the beach; and we then succeeded in getting her out high and dry. Nearly an hour elapsed, and we gained no tidings of the small

boat and her company. We began to fear it had fared badly with them, especially when one of our men returned from walking along the beach, and reported something in the distance looking like a boat floating bottom upwards.

I then ran along the beach to see for myself, but I could not make out what he reported, nor did I see any trace of the boat. Shortly afterwards she put in an appearance. She had kept alongside the ship, owing to her crew being undecided whether to wait till daylight or put off at once. Finally they decided to leave, and then they shoved off. Being square-sterned, they ran her ashore stern foremost. All in her landed safe and sound, but like ourselves they were dripping wet.

It was then about midnight, or perhaps a little after. According to our captain, we were on a small island off the west coast of Sumatra, but he did not seem to be very positive about it.

CHAPTER III.

PONGAH.

The crew—The natives—A present—The second mate's watch—The chief of Pongah—Our first hut—The Rajah of Tenom—Visits to the wreck—Fate of our pets—The steward's nightmare—The cook cross-examined—Our dangerous position—Disposition of the natives—Our destination.

THE following is a list of our company when we were wrecked.

W. S. Woodhouse	Captain.
C. S. Crichton	Chief Officer.
L. K. Moore	Second Officer.
T. W. Bubb	Third Officer.
J. Wilson	Chief Engineer.
A. Kydd	Second Engineer.
W. Bradley	Third Engineer.
J. Thompson	Purser.
G. Essery	Chief Steward.
R. Murray[1]	Second Steward.
Ah Yah	Chief Cook.
Ah Foo	Second Cook.
J. Grant	Donkeyman.
L. Müller	Boatswain.
R. Wells[1]	Carpenter.

[1] Died in Sumatra.

J. Stanton	Fireman.
J. Kelly	"
J. Fowler[1]	"
M. Gerraty[1]	"
W. Armstrong[1]	"
T. Bibby[1]	"
H. Ter-Haar	Seaman.
C. Gronn	"
G. Tasserio	"
F. Jacobson	"
O. Holgerson	"
M. Michelson	"
C. Loscocco[1]	"

We had scarcely landed, when a couple of natives were espied in the distance cautiously approaching along the beach. They came within about seventy or eighty yards of us, seemed to count our numbers, and then disappeared into the forest. They returned a few minutes afterwards, accompanied by others. They approached us very cautiously, eyed us very closely, and in one or two cases, where our clothes had a bulky appearance, felt our persons to ascertain if we were armed.

This was rather a curious moment for us, and without an exception, I believe, we all felt more or less uncomfortable in our position. The islanders were then at war with the Dutch, and we did not know but that we would be mistaken for enemies. Several attempts were made to explain our position by signs and motions, and pointings to our wrecked ship.

[1] Died in Sumatra.

Suddenly it struck us that our Chinese cook might be able to do better. He seemed to be somewhat more scared than the general run of us, and stood in the background. On the captain putting a question to him, he came forward, and to our relief, was able to speak with the natives, owing to his knowing a little Malay. On explaining our nationality and position, the natives retired to the wood, leaving us rather doubtful as to whether they were friendly, or otherwise.

During their absence we most of us picked up stout sticks or cudgels; we were determined not to be slaughtered—if it came to that—without some effort at defence. Presently we saw, this time to our joy, our half-civilized, half-naked, warrior acquaintances returning with a present of bananas—for a fruit-offering in these parts is a token of peace or good-will. At the same time we observed in the distance a large number of fully armed natives. At their head was one who, by his appearance, was evidently a leader. They stepped out from the wood, and not till then did we thoroughly realize how useless would any attempt of ours have been at resistance. To say nothing of swords and daggers, they had fire-arms sufficient to cover at least two-thirds of our number.

It was some time before many of us would eat the fruit; but finally the feeling wore off. Having made the present, and been thanked by us, through the

cook, the warriors joined the main body, and all immediately disappeared.

A few of them again returned and told us that their village was close by, and that a house would be put at our disposal if we would accompany them. Preferring to wait till daylight, we thanked them, and said we would remain here till morning. They again left us, and returned shortly after with some dry tree-branches. They lighted two fires, and round them we quickly gathered. Unfortunately for us, the rain fell in torrents, and this added considerably to our already miserable condition. The few hours which we had to pass in this plight, waiting for daylight, seemed as though they would never end. At last the long-wished-for morn arrived, and in spite of our disasters, we could not refrain from passing a joke at the comical appearance we presented. Wringing wet, cold and shivering, drowsy and fatigued, and—in the case of those who had lain down—covered from head to foot with sand, we certainly had a very singular look.

Daylight had not long set in when messengers from the chief of the village arrived, requesting us to go down to him. With the exception of the second mate, myself, and four of our crew, who remained to look after the few provisions saved in the boats, all hands proceeded to the village. Our position, when left alone, was anything but comfortable. Several natives

gathered round and very inquisitively inspected us and our stores, thereby causing us much annoyance, which, of course, under the circumstances, it would have been very imprudent to have displayed.

One fellow, more impudent than the others, made himself very offensive. He espied a portion of the

Pongah, on the coast of Sumatra, where the *Nisero* was wrecked, November 8, 1883.

second mate's watch-chain, and did not rest till he had a look at it, and the watch, which he immediately asked for. On being refused, he at once assumed a threatening manner, and several times laid hold of his sword-handle. He even went so far as to draw it out behind the second mate's back, and indulge in grimaces expressive of what he would like to do. However,

one or two of the others laughingly made motions to me not to take any notice of him—at least, so I interpreted the signs. He, however, continued his manœuvres, and the mate finally turned the watch over to him, fearing that too much obstinacy might be injurious to our position. After nearly an hour's exposure to this sort of thing, we were greatly relieved to see our party returning in company with the chief of the village.

Yapatee, the Chief of Pongah.

The village is called Pongah. The chief's name was Yapatee. On the arrival of Yapatee, we informed him of the conduct of the native. He immediately ordered that individual in rather a severe tone of voice, to return the watch; and he did so, though he did not seem over pleased at the order. The chief took a look at our few stores, and cast several very thoughtful glances at

the ship. Then he looked at us, and gave orders for the stores to be taken down to the hut which he had placed at our service; and down to the hut we also steered.

Our first move on arriving was to get a fire going, to prepare something to drink, and to dry our clothes as best we could. All hands were bundled into the one hut, which consisted of but one apartment. According to English ideas, there was scarcely room enough in it for the accommodation of more than two or three men. This beautiful dwelling we called our palace. It had originally been the chief's own abode. It was a wooden construction, very roughly put together, and roofed with a leaf resembling the palm in appearance. The roof, being of no very recent date, was very far from being water-tight; in many places the sky, in large patches, was plainly visible through it.

After obtaining some refreshment, many of us undressed, without altogether reducing ourselves to a state of nudity, and with some fresh water, obtained from a well at the back of our hut, we washed the salt water out of our clothes and hung them out to dry on lines of rattan, or cane, which we got from some of the chief's followers. In the evening the chief of the village paid us a visit, and remained two or three hours chatting to us, through the medium of the cook.

He gave us a good deal of information as to the

manners and customs of his people, and made many inquiries as to our English ways. Our captain replied with an astounding account of our British qualifications, which assuredly was not unexaggerated. We could not obtain from the chief any decisive information as to what he intended doing with us, as he carefully avoided all questions put to him on that subject; but we afterwards learnt that he was a subordinate, and could not very well take it on himself to act as perhaps, and as we now believe, he would have wished.

Fearing that, situated as we were, we might be uncomfortable, he supplied us with two rifles and a little ammunition; and he also sent in two guards to sleep in the hut. One of them was a relation of his by marriage; the other was one of his head officers, or kranis, as they term them. In spite of this attention, but few of us spent a comfortable night, owing to our half-damp clothing and a terrible plague of mosquitoes. Speaking for myself, it was not till early in the morning that, thoroughly exhausted, I fell off to sleep.

On this day, Friday, the 9th of November, we were unable to get off to the ship owing to the very heavy surf on the beach. Had circumstances been favourable to the attempt, I do not believe our chief, as we termed him, would have consented until the arrival of his royal master.

This famous individual arrived during the night.

His name was Rajah Tuku Imam Mouda, or the Rajah of Tenom. He had a very strong body of followers with him, and it was quite evident to us that the chief of Pongah was but a nobody in the presence of the other. The Rajah of Tenom, in personal appearance, was a very fine man, of about six feet high, and built in proportion. He had a somewhat pleasant expression, and presented a great contrast to his followers, who were none of them of very large build, and most of them repulsive rather than attractive.

Our first impression of the man was anything but favourable. He never so much as came near us, nor spoke to us in any way for several hours, and evidently considered himself of very great importance.

On hearing that the rajah, the chief, and their followers were at the scene of the wreck, a distance of about three hundred yards from the village, we all went up to see what was transpiring. After a parley had taken place between the two leaders and one or two of the head kranis, our captain and cook were sent for. The rajah put many questions to them as to what we had on board, the number of fire-arms, the amount of money, and the nature of our cargo, as also inquiries relating to how we came there, the nationality of our crew, and if we were sure that there were no Dutchmen amongst us.

Pointing to some of us who had fair hair, he inquired if they were not Dutchmen. Our captain, of course,

stated positively that there was not a Dutchman present. But in spite of this, our foreign sailors fell in for a considerable amount of suspicion.

The captain expressed a wish to go on board and, if possible, save a few articles. This the rajah refused to allow, but he consented to a couple of our men going accompanied by the natives. Meanwhile two attempts were made by the natives—and very good swimmers they were—to reach the wreck, but the heavy surf kept them back. After a struggle with the surf, our men, assisted by the natives then on the beach, numbering about three hundred, got the life-boat launched, shoved off, and reached the vessel safely. On getting the boat pretty well filled they returned. Every article was taken before the rajah, and we were not allowed to touch a thing.

After mid-day a second boat put off, in which went the second mate, myself, and four of our men. Just as we got her launched in the surf, and were giving way with our oars, a number of natives climbed into her, and as we were already overcrowded, the journey was somewhat dangerous. One fellow was hanging on, half way across, before he could be got in over the gunwale. We landed safely alongside, left two of our men in charge, and saved a great number of things, taking all the small valuables we could find fore and aft.

On getting ashore again we were not allowed to in-

terfere with these things any more than we were with the others. Everything was taken before the rajah, who was then perched in the bow of our other boat, where all the articles already landed were put, she being hauled up high on the beach. On being asked to allow us dry clothing, he at first hesitated, and then he consented to allow us one change, watching us very closely to see that we did not help ourselves to more.

Later on our captain was allowed to go off, in company with the Pongah chief and some natives. And he informed us that the latter never let him out of sight for a moment, but said nothing when he put one or two small articles in his pocket. It was evident this man had to conform, perhaps against his will, to the wishes of the rajah.

On Sunday, the 11th of November, the natives put off by themselves, and we kept away from the scene. About 8 o'clock the rajah sent to the camp for a couple of our men to go and show them whereabouts our oil and a few other articles were kept. This we were bound to grant him, as a refusal would have only complicated matters. Having obtained nearly all the movable articles, the natives proceeded to unship many of the cabin fixings or fittings. Afterwards they turned their attention to the cargo.

I may here mention that we succeeded in getting the three monkeys ashore. Jacko, our favourite, died soon

after landing, owing to his being exposed to the fury of the sea which was breaking over the ship. Our two pigs swam ashore, but were despatched by the natives, as they have a loathing for such animals. We also got the dogs ashore. One, the black one, we believed they killed, as it disappeared very mysteriously. The other, the poodle, we took down to the village.

Could Europeans have looked in on us at our meal of rice, they would have indeed been highly amused at the scene before them. If they can imagine us, five or six at a time, with sleeves rolled up, round a big pot, dipping in with Adam's knife and fork (our fingers), and a half cocoanut-shell for a drinking-cup, they can form a good idea of our introduction to the bushman's life.

On Monday, the 12th of November, the rajah very coolly informed us that had we not been able to speak with him and explain our nationality, not a soul among us would have been spared. There is a bitter enmity existing between all the natives of the island and the Dutch, and the first impression was that we were Dutchmen.

Our sufferings at night were terrible, from the savage attacks of the mosquitoes, which, without exaggeration, flew about in clouds. We also received much annoyance from ants, cockroaches, beetles, and other insects, of species strangers to me, as perhaps they would be to a more enlightened naturalist. Since the

wreck we kept nightly watches each of one hour's duration, an officer or engineer, and a sailor or fireman, being on duty at the same time. The guards at first allowed us by our chief were continued. They were a very agreeable pair of fellows in their actions towards us.

In the night our camp witnessed a scene never to be forgotten by those under whose notice it came. This was a panic amongst our men; for our chief steward had the nightmare, and the unearthly yells which came from him greatly alarmed all who were awake. But on those who chanced to be asleep and were suddenly roused, the effect was awful. They sprang up, clutching wildly at one another, and echoing the yells which had first fallen on their ears. In one case a sailor threw himself so viciously on a fireman that he inflicted a very bad wound with his nails on the man's throat. Fortunately, I was on watch at the time, and being a witness to the whole affair, did not experience the sensation of being suddenly roused up under such circumstances.

I shouted to the men that all was well, but it was several minutes before they could be quieted down. One of the Italian sailors was on watch with me, but not being able to speak English, he could not give any help to bring matters to a close. Any attempt to rouse the steward from his dream only made him yell the louder. He afterwards informed us he was dream-

ing that a number of armed natives were in the house, and that one of them clapped his hand on his mouth to prevent him giving us an alarm, while he thought that all hands were asleep and about to be murdered. His attempt to force out the warning produced the awful noises which might have ended seriously. One man made attempts to procure the chopper which had been brought ashore, but fortunately was too excited to call to mind where he had last seen it.

On Tuesday evening, the 13th of November, the rajah sent for our chief cook, and put him through a strict examination about us all, especially about the foreign sailors; and then told him that "God had brought us here, and at a proper time we would be released." While they were cross-examining him there was no one near but the rajah and some of his leading men; and it being in rather a lonely spot, and the questions being sternly put, the poor cook was rather upset. As he described his feelings afterwards to us, he said, "My heart went a hammer-hammer, and I begin cry like anything." But they told him not to be afraid.

No information could we obtain as to what the rajah intended to do with us. But we felt confident that no effort on his part would be made to get us away until his villainous work of plunder was finished. The chief of Pongah showed himself much better disposed towards us than his master, who, in fact, never so much

as came near us, and, when passing the house, held down his head, or looked in an opposite direction. In the evening the chief of Pongah entered into a game of dominoes and cards with us, and was highly amused, when our second engineer, purposely, began to cheat, and was detected. Afterwards we had a couple of songs, to cheer matters up a bit, as some of our company were inclined to become very despondent. In fact, one man took matters to heart so much that he became decidedly foolish, and went round bidding us all good-bye, as he knew it was the last night he had to live. But most of us had great hopes that, after coming through what we had, we were not being spared for a worse death.

Were the inhabitants at peace, our lives would not have been in such danger, but as matters then stood our position was very precarious. We had been informed by the rajah, that the natives from the interior, over whom he had little or no control, had on their knees clamoured for our lives, as they were not able to comprehend the difference between Englishmen and Dutchmen; and the fact that white men had injured them was sufficient cause for their wreaking their vengeance on us.

Several incidents occurred showing us the fierce nature of the tribe amongst whom we were prisoners. On one occasion a krani of the rajah's, who had been appointed to guard the spoil on the beach during the

night, deserted his post, and spent the time in one of the huts in the village. The rajah, coming early on the scene next morning, missed the sentry, and, on his appearance, jumped up from his seat, amongst the plunder, drew his sword, and in a furious passion followed him as he ran off. Just as the rajah had caught him up he passed between our captain and third mate. The rajah had lifted his sword to deal the blow, but fearing he might injure one of us in such close quarters, he refrained from striking. He afterwards informed us that, but for the presence of our two men, he would have maimed him, if he had not killed him.

On the Wednesday night another incident, of a similar nature, came under our notice. The Pongah chief was sitting chatting with us, the cook interpreting, when a hand was quietly inserted between the outside wall of the hut and the edge of the flooring, a space of three or four inches. The would-be thief laid hold of an umbrella belonging to our chief engineer, and it would have gone, but for one of us laying hold of it. In an instant the chief, seeing what was taking place, drew his sword and rushed out, followed by a couple of his kranis, who were in the hut at the time. But they were too late, and the thief escaped. The expression on the chief's face as he rushed out left no doubt on our minds but that he would in some way have injured the thief had he caught him.

Much to our joy next day we were informed that after breakfast we were to set out on a march for Tenom, where our prospect of getting a ship to take us to Penang or Singapore would be much greater than where we were. Failing to obtain one there, we were to proceed to a place called Brabbo.

On the rajah being asked why he would not take us northward, to Acheen, or some port in that direction, he hesitated, and answered with a scowl, that neither he nor his men could venture there, for the Dutch would fall in with them and murder them. And this he said doubtless to blind us as to his real intentions.

CHAPTER IV.

LOWER TENOM.

The start for Tenom—Through the plantations—The jungle—The passage of the swamp—Accident to the second engineer—Fording the creek—Steamers in sight—A snake-hunt—Messengers in disguise—Letters from the Dutch—Return of the Rajah.

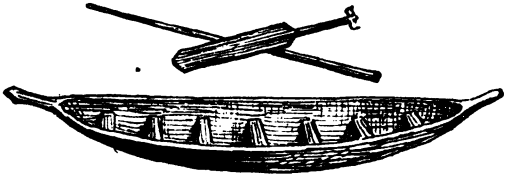
WE started on our journey about mid-day on Friday, the 16th of November. Singular to relate, the rajah sent the chief of Pongah on board the ship in the morning, and during his absence, unexpectedly made his appearance at our camp, and hurried us off. He seemed very eager and impatient to get clear of the village, and this was the first occasion on which he spoke personally to us all.

Our first halt was just outside Pongah, on the bank of the river on which the village is built. There we had a short delay, awaiting the arrival of a prow, or large surf-boat, belonging to the natives, which was large enough to take all hands across in one journey.

On landing at the other side, as the boat drew a few feet of water, we were unable to get close in shore;

consequently many of us had our feet wet, and this caused a little talk at the time. Had we only known what was before us, we would have laughed at such trivial discomfort. We had been obliged to leave several articles behind us, for we were forced to carry our own things, and could not afford to drag too much of a load.

The banks of this river, in the direction of its source, were very pretty. Immense cocoanut-trees in abundance, towering to a great height, and well filled with



Native Canoe, Stick, and Paddle.

fruit, were the most prominent amongst the forest plants. With them were many species, the names of which I do not know, and there were bananas, mangoes, and pine-apples, and also an occasional breadfruit-tree.

Having all landed, we proceeded, single file, for about ten or fifteen minutes; we then came to another halt in an opening, where two or three huts were pitched. The occupants came out, and in a very humble manner saluted the rajah. Here we were all

supplied with cocoa-nuts, aud the natives opened them for us with their daggers. We also had as much sugar-cane as we could demolish. We were evidently objects of great curiosity. During the halt an armed force, consisting of about twenty warriors, were sent on ahead, and our escort overtook us, we having left Pongah before them. On their arrival we again set out, our march being directed through a rich plantation or plantations of sugar-cane, pepper-trees, pine-apples, cocoa-nuts, and bananas.

This was a very tiring part of the journey, as the plantations being very open, we were exposed to the full heat of the sun. We began to find our small bundles a great load. The natives were accustomed to this work, and not being encumbered either with clothing or anything to carry, went on at a quick trot, and we had to keep time with them. We were also at a great disadvantage, owing to want of exercise and proper food. Rice is a poor ration for Europeans to undergo hardship on.

Having got through the plantations, we were delighted to see before us a clear, running stream; but we were much more pleased to see the rajah and his followers preparing for their devotions, and thus giving us a fine opportunity of refreshing ourselves with a drink and a little rest. Our next move brought us into the heart of a dense jungle, which afforded some shelter from the burning sun. In some places

the grass towered over our heads, and trees, new to our eyes, seemed tall enough to kiss the clouds.

Scarcely had we congratulated ourselves on the protection the forest afforded when another difficulty presented itself. This was a long, deep, miry swamp. I should imagine we were about an hour getting clear of this obstacle. Many a good dip some of us got, waist-deep, into a combination of mud, animal matter, and rotten vegetation and stagnant water. In many places the swamp was of a depth dangerous to life. If once a man were properly immersed, the chances of his getting out were small enough. I had several dips myself, but nothing worse than knee-deep. Places had to be crossed on single spars, about three or four inches in diameter, and as these in many instances were not fixed at either end, they were very unsteady.

At one spot, where we had a somewhat deep and ugly part to cross, two spars had been laid down to span it. Here our second engineer was very unfortunate. One of the spars gave way under him when he had got about half-way, and landed him out on his face and hands across the other, which fortunately stood the strain. It was with difficulty he balanced himself again, and he and his bundle were in a pretty mess from the immersion. This break-down made it very difficult for the remainder of our company to get over, and several were upset before they landed on the other side. The natives, in their light equipments and bare feet, made these

passages without any great amount of trouble; and, being accustomed to such travelling, had a hearty laugh over our misfortunes. At last, wearied and wet, we got clear of the swamp, and found ourselves resting once more in sight of the beach. The rajah's reason for dragging us through such an intricate path we could not imagine, for on gaining the shore we were surprised to see in the distance the point whence we had set out. To say nothing of the obstacles, we must have travelled over three times the ground we would have done had we gone along the coast.

Being totally in the rajah's power, we were of course bound "to grin and bear it." At this stage of our journey he left us to return to Pongah, and handed us over to his head krani, or commander-in-chief, as we called him, to see us the rest of the way. Being already greatly fatigued, we found travelling by the sands a work of much difficulty, owing to the feet sinking two or three inches, and slipping backwards at every step. Our pace gradually slackened, and our spells of rest became much more frequent.

We had not been long on this part of the route before we came to a large creek, which at high-water time has to be forded. Unfortunately it was now full up. We were a little surprised to see our leaders, on reaching it, coolly step in and begin to wade. There was nothing for it but to follow. It was about waist-deep in many places. It certainly

cooled us a little at the time, and removed a good deal of mud acquired in the swamp; but on once more reaching the sand, our sodden boots and socks made progress very laborious.

Night was now fast falling, and we were informed that a considerable amount of ground had yet to be covered; it was evident that we would have to do it in the dark, as the moon did not rise till very late. Camping out in our present condition was not to be thought of, and our escort seemed very anxious to get to our destination. When darkness set in they altered their position, and, from being in our front and rear, drew up on all sides of us, and, as far as the surf would permit, kept away from the edge of the forest.

We had the pleasure of seeing a small crocodile on the banks of a creek which we had to ford, but on our approach he quickly made off, so that we did not get a close inspection. Soon afterwards we came suddenly on a very large turtle, lying almost buried in the sand. We halted for a short time, and some of the natives, by means of tree branches, which they inserted under the turtle, robbed her of some eggs. To this she decidedly objected, and showed her indignation by violently beating her breast against the ground, evidently with the intention of smashing the eggs. For this the natives seemed prepared, and as she rose to make the blows they forced the spars further under.

Our progress was now very slow, and our halts very

frequent. We were nearly run to the last with fatigue; and at each spell of rest the greater number of us, I amongst them, lay at full stretch on the sand. No doubt, had we been allowed, we would have lain there all night, though in our condition it would have been a foolhardy thing to do.

We had not long been on our journey, after leaving the turtle, when a loud roar from the direction of the forest brought our chief and guides to a halt. They informed us it was a lion, evidently alone, and some distance off, but that there was nothing to fear, as, even should he make his appearance, he would not face a large body of men unless driven to do so by hunger. At last we arrived at the mouth of the Tenom river, and we heard that our destination was only a short distance up. This was indeed grand news for our now thoroughly exhausted crew. From the mouth of the river we had to pass through a dense piece of jungle and forest, along a difficult and dangerous path, owing to the snakes, which there abound.

Having got through the jungle, we were once more rather taken aback to see our guides again plunging waist-deep into a creek—this time of fresh water—which had to be forded. We got over all right, crossed a narrow neck of land, and found ourselves on the bank of one of the branches of the river. These branches, of which there are two, run into the main

stream, between the village of Tenom and the mouth. Our branch we crossed in canoes, two being used, and five or six of us embarking each time. It is wonderful how the natives manage these very sensitive concerns. They load them down to within half an inch of the water, and propel them with surprising steadiness.

On landing on the other side, we were glad to find that our future camp was close at hand. Never were travellers more thankful for a resting-place than we were. Rough-and-ready though it was, it was certainly an improvement on our Pongah quarters. It was more roomy, and had the advantage of a second floor under the roof. This portion was allotted to the captain, officers, and engineers, while the men occupied the lower floor, and, I think, had the best of the bargain, the upper portion being all open fore and aft. It did not take us very long to throw off our wet clothes and put on the dry ones we had brought with us, nor did we trouble about having any refreshment got ready. One and all flung themselves down anyhow. I dropped on rather an unfortunate place. It was in a slight hollow of the floor, and our wet clothes being slung overhead, the water which came off them collected around and under me. In the morning the things I had put on were little better than those I had taken off.

There were two Chinamen here who had been detained, we were informed, eight months, for a debt

owing by their master to the rajah. The port being shut by the Dutch, no communication could be made to enable the merchant to come and settle it. The Chinamen showed us a good deal of kindness, and occasionally procured one or two small items of food from the natives, which considerably helped down the rice.

Our anxiety, exposure, and low diet soon told its tale. Several complained, and all were much reduced in strength. From the upper part of our abode we could see the sea, beyond the mouth of the river. Every day many things belonging to our wreck were brought past us; and judging from the amount of sugar, the natives must have saved a considerable quantity of it. The village of Tenom consists of about sixteen or eighteen huts, and several of them are shops, if they can be so called.

On Monday, the 19th of November, in the morning, we saw a steamer, evidently a man-of-war, slowly steaming southward, and lying very close in shore. As she had come from a northerly direction we felt confident she must have seen the wreck. Towards evening we espied another steamer, probably the same one passing northwards.

On the following evening, Tuesday, two steamers hove in sight, steering southwards, within a few ship's-lengths of each other. From their slow speed they were evidently searching the coast for something.

This gave us great hopes, and it now became our firm belief that we would not remain much longer when the affair became known outside.

On Thursday evening the village youths despatched a very large snake, about six feet long. One of them had ascended a cocoanut-tree, when he discovered the victim in another tree close by. On passing the word to those below, a general shout arose among them, and in a very short time sticks and stones were flying up around it on all sides. At last the snake was brought down by a piece of wood, and scarcely had it touched the ground when a little fellow stepped forward, and severed the head clean off with his sword. In these parts the juveniles, almost as soon as they can walk, have sword and dagger buckled on them.

Our thermometer of hopes was destined to rise still higher on the Friday. Early in the morning a couple of strangers arrived here in the guise of pedlars, and on getting the villagers pretty well occupied examining their wares, one of them slipped a note into the hand of one of our men who was standing near. It was addressed to the captain, and on being opened was found to contain two letters, one from a Dutch captain, the other from a resident on this coast, also a Dutchman. Both letters were written in a sympathizing manner, and cautioned us to be very patient and discreet, as we were in the hands of a barbarian and a

ruffian. They also stated that the writers had heard how we were being treated as regards our diet and personal property, but that we were to take courage, as they had every hope of ere long setting us free; that all was being done that could be done to obtain our release, though it required great caution in dealing with such a man as the rajah, and that were the Dutch to attempt any violence in trying a rescue, he would without doubt butcher every man of us sooner than give in.

Later in the day another letter reached us, openly, no attempt at concealment being made. It was brought by a native of Acheen, accompanied by five attendants. It was also from a Dutch captain, containing similar advice as to our conduct, and accompanying it were a few provisions, viz. bread, coffee, wine and brandy, which, though a fair amount in themselves, were but a couple of days' stores for eight-and-twenty men. The bearer of these things also brought a letter for the rajah, offering a large ransom for our release. The rajah being still at Pongah, carrying on his work of plunder, the messenger proceeded there at once, having given up our letter and stores. Another snake of a superior size to that previously mentioned was hunted in the evening in the rear of our hut; but owing to some of our men's unskilled actions, it got away in the forest.

The rajah arrived on Saturday, accompanied by the

messenger and a strong body-guard, all fully armed. After crossing over into the village, they repaired to their devotions, and then, after a little refreshment, a consultation took place among them. On this coming to a close the rajah bent his footsteps towards our camp. Through the agency of our cook a short conversation took place between him and the captain, the subject of which threw no light on his intentions, as he pointedly avoided all questions relating to our liberty; and in the end showed signs of vexation when an inquiry was made on that point. He, however, brought the interview suddenly to an end, by stating he would prefer we were nearer to his own residence, and ordering us to get our things together and prepare for another march, this time inland. There was, of course, not the slightest use in remonstrating. We had to comply, much to our annoyance, as we would sooner have remained where we had a view of the sea, and, should matters come to a crisis, where there was a chance of our helping ourselves, in the event of an attempt being made to release us from the river mouth.

CHAPTER V.

UPPER TENOM.

Journey from Lower Tenom—New quarters—The Bird-cage—The Rajah's nephews—Religious observances—How a hut is built—The musical boxes—Alarm as to a lion—Arrival of the Chinaman—First appearance of Tuku-Yet—Captain Roura—A consultation—Buffaloes—Bathing—The Rajah's notion of costume—A war-dance—White Cap—The Chinaman again—The Rajah of Rigas—Canoeing under difficulties—Increased demands—The captain, second engineer, and Chinese cook sent to negotiate—The captain does not return—Christmas Day—Two blue-jackets drowned—Illness of the mate.

We started on our journey about 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th of November. Our few stores and bundles went part of the way by canoe, a native and the second mate accompanying them. The first part of our tramp was through plantations similar to those already described, and after about fifteen minutes' travelling, we came out on the bank of the river by which our baggage had been sent. Here we embarked in canoes, four, five, and six in each, according to its size. In each case a native paddled us. After a jour-

ney of about twenty minutes, we landed again on the same side of the river. Here we halted till the remainder came up, our baggage having arrived before us. When the others arrived, we proceeded to tramp through a piece of country a little more open than any we had yet seen. Soon we found ourselves on the banks of the other branch, the main one, which is called the Tenom river. From where we were our third camp was visible further up stream. Here we landed soon afterwards, our journey during this stage being along the river bank. The river winds considerably, the bends in some parts being very short and abrupt; and the scenery along the banks, to any one circumstanced otherwise than we were, would be very attractive. We arrived at our new quarters about sunset.

The captain, chief engineer, chief mate, captain's nephew, and chief steward occupied a hut called by us the Bird-cage, from which the rajah's brother had to clear out. Adjoining it was the one in which the second mate, second engineer, third mate, second steward, two cooks, and myself were located; and a miserable place it was, being all open and badly roofed. The men this time were more fortunate. They were housed about a hundred yards farther up, and, putting aside the rough construction of their hut, had a very roomy place. They were blessed with a good covering overhead, it being of leaves, like the rest, but very closely laid together. This house was

outside the fencing which enclosed the private grounds surrounding the rajah's own domicile. Each of the three huts was reached by means of a short step-ladder, the flooring being about four feet from the ground. The foot of our ladder was only about fourteen or fifteen feet from the water's edge. We called our quarters Upper Tenom, and our old ones Lower Tenom.

Two nephews of the rajah's spent a portion of Sunday with us, and much amusement was caused by our trying to converse with them, and they with us, all being done by antics more than by the tongue. We afterwards learnt that they were the sons of the Rajah of Bubun, a place about twelve miles south of Lower Tenom. The youngest was about twenty years old, and the other about two or three and twenty. The former was a pleasant sort of young fellow, and had good-nature stamped on his countenance; the other was colder and more distant in his ways. The name of the younger was Mahmoud, that of the other, Apanama; but we nicknamed them Rajah No. 3 and Rajah No. 2, the latter being the eldest. On our closing the day with a few hymns, a number of the natives gathered round, and paid marked attention, and showed every respect on being informed by the cook of the nature of the singing. We thought the presence of the two young rajahs had something to do with the respect shown, but afterwards found it was not so.

They themselves were very attentive to their own form of worship, praying four or five times a day, facing the sun each time. In many cases it was obviously a mere form, for when the rajah was not on the scene, they seldom prayed.

On the Monday another hut alongside of ours was started building. It was for Mahmoud, or No. 3 Rajah, and a couple of his attendants. The throwing together of a hut after their style is simplicity itself. Four vertical poles are sunk into the ground, and across them fore and aft spars are lashed above and below, the upper ones to support the outer edge of the roof, the lower ones to support the flooring, on which, in most cases, split bamboo or light sticks are lashed down. The lashing used is split cane. The roofing consists of a leaf resembling the palm, the long, narrow blades of which grow out from both sides of the centre rib, and, when being used for roofing, are brought over and plaited into each other. When roofing the huts the leaves are placed somewhat after our style of slate roofing, one over the other, and are fixed in their places by split cane. The natives are so expert at this work, that a hut is built in a few hours.

On Tuesday we met with a sore disappointment. An English boat was seen to round the bend of the river, and the individual sitting in her bows had on an European black coat. We imagined all sorts of good news, but on a nearer approach it turned out to be

one of our own boats, worked by natives, and laden with spoil from the wreck.

Next day the rajah's eldest nephew brought us a musical box, which had been purchased many years before at Penang; it being out of order, he wanted us to repair it. On taking it to pieces, we found the cause of its not working; but not having sufficient tools at our command, we could not mend it. He then brought us another, also out of order, but not beyond our small abilities. We soon got this going. It played eight tunes, amongst them being, "God save the Queen," "Sweet By-and-by," and the "Old Hundredth Psalm," and the remainder dance music, mostly Italian and Swiss.

One of our Chinaman friends arrived here from Tenom, on business, for the rajah. The rajah met him some distance below our hut, and kept him there for a long time in conversation. He slipped down to us on the rajah going towards his own dwelling, and, through our cook, informed us that two men-of-war were off the coast; also that the Dutch wanted to send us in some stores, but had been refused permission to land them. Anything an Englishman liked to forward could have been brought, but the native hatred of the Dutch was so great as to forbid of any transaction of the smallest nature with them. It was nearly time something was done for us, as we were again back on plain rice diet, our little stock of stores having been finished.

We were informed that a lion had been seen in the district during the night; and, to prevent a surprise, a bamboo barricade was thrown up around us, and we had strict injunctions to keep inside, especially after sunset. But, strange to say, no precaution was taken at our men's quarters. Like us, the men had guards posted near them, and not a move of theirs passed unnoticed. During our Chinese friend's visits a close watch was kept on his and our movements.

Our Chinese friend arrived again on the Thursday, and informed us that the Brabbo Rajah (as he was then called), his proper name being Tuku-Yet, and a Captain Roura, were on their way to see our rajah, to ascertain his real demands. Soon after they arrived. The former had nothing to recommend him at a first glance; on the contrary, he impressed us as being a thorough scoundrel. Captain Roura was a very old man, a Frenchman by birth, and very grey, almost to whiteness. They both received the salutations from the natives which are accorded to the rajahs.

After the customary greetings had taken place, the articles were handed round for chewing, consisting of betel-nut, a green leaf, and a white substance called chinam, which when masticated produced a brownish-red-coloured fluid. This is greatly indulged in by the natives, and sometimes used by them medicinally.

Strange to say, until our captain approached Captain Roura, late in the evening, that individual never came near one of us. The consultation between

Captain Roura, Tuku-Yet, and the rajah was resumed this morning, and lasted till mid-day. At its conclusion we were positively informed that all was settled for our release, that there wonld only be a day or two's delay, to bring the required ransom-money, $100,000. Tuku-Yet spoke a little broken English, which he had picked up when trading in the port of Bubun. He had also been several times to Penang and Singapore.

On this day we saw our first herd of buffaloes; they were on the opposite bank, and we were told that the rajah has an immense stock in his territory. We had also the first bit of recreation since landing, in making a short trip up the river in our small boat, accompanied by No. 2, as I will call the second rajah, that being the usual way in which he was spoken of amongst us.

We were blessed with one thing, and that was the great convenience for bathing. The rajah was very particular about the cut of our bathing gear. Some made proper drawers from a little material supplied us. At first anything large enough to encircle the waist was thought decent. But his royal highness thought differently, and ordered that the costume should reach a certain height above the hips, and at the very least down to the knees.

It appeared to us that the natives were under the impression that our affair was likely soon to come to

a close, and were making themselves uncommonly civil and pleasant. The night before we had amused ourselves for a couple of hours amongst them, at our men's quarters. They in a jocular way frequently called us Blunnas, and our calling them the same created much laughter among them, the word "Blunna" being the Malay for Dutchman.

But to return to our semi-civilized entertainment of the previous evening. The native part of the performance consisted, firstly, of the music, which was a din and clatter of tomtoms, and a kettle-drum; and, secondly, of a couple of men going through a war-dance in great style. This part was very interesting to us, the actors throwing themselves into it with great earnestness. Any person dropping suddenly on the scene would have imagined that a real conflict was taking place, but a glance at the circle around would have soon dispelled the illusion. One of our men attracted their attention, and evidently somewhat astonished them, with a hornpipe and a jig. We also went through one or two round dances; but no ladies figured in the performance.

We had another short trip in our boat on Saturday morning, the 1st of December; No. 2, and the rajah's secretary, Johnnie White Cap, as we called him, for the want of a better name, accompanying us. White Cap did all the old man's correspondence. He was born at Acheen, and educated there; and could read and write his own language—a very exceptional

piece of education among these people, the rajah himself being unable to do so.

After obtaining a few cocoa-nuts, which we demolished while dropping down the stream, we returned. On landing, we found that a few more stores had arrived, and these, we were informed, Tuku-Yet had succeeded in getting forwarded to us. Our friend of Tenom, the Chinaman, appeared on the scene this morning, and informed us that two English and three Dutch ships were now off the coast, at Rigas, a port north of Pongah, of which we had been kept in total ignorance until then.

The mate was down with fever, and continued very low and weak. Our Chinese friend appeared again on Sunday, bringing some medicine and a couple of dainties prepared by himself for our invalid. Towards evening our second engineer began to complain of being ill, and totally lost his appetite. The other Chinee who was detained in Tenom, being somewhat proud and a heavy opium-smoker, was fond of solitude and quiet.

On the Tuesday we had another trip in our boat; this time to obtain firewood. The second engineer continued very bad. The mate was somewhat better.

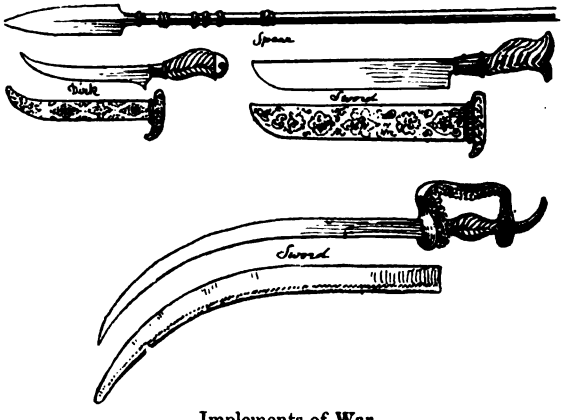
On the Thursday we had another visit from our friend, who informed us that the Rajah of Rigas was on his way to see our rajah. On the arrival of that individual, soon after, he handed us some medicines, and

another small stock of stores, similar to those previously received. He inquired from our captain as to what food we were receiving, how we were treated, and the number on our sick-list. On being told, he appeared to be annoyed, and said something to the rajah, which that person, judging from his expression, did not receive very amiably.

We were also informed that the money would be paid, but other demands would not be listened to; and should he not deliver us up, the Dutch would in a few days bombard his ports, and land an expedition to punish him.

We did not think they would resort to this, as, according to their own letters to us, it would imperil our lives to a dangerous extent. Our anxiety daily became greater, but any change was gladly looked forward to, were it only to terminate our miserable position. Previous to the arrival of the Rigas rajah a couple of goats had been put inside our enclosure, no doubt to lead him astray as to the food we were receiving. Our chief engineer and third mate made an attempt at canoeing, but they soon discovered it was anything but the easy task it appears at first sight. They succeeded very well in running down with the current, but when they came to face the return journey, they were much knocked about, and yawed and twisted to all points of the compass, but made no headway. The natives were highly

amused, and left them in their little predicament for a while. They then sent off another canoe to bring them back. Our second mate, feeling confident he could manage one, was allowed to try; but, like the others, he paddled down but could not return. The chief engineer and third mate made another trip, and succeeded in getting back by lying in close to the



Implements of War.

bank and dragging the canoe up by means of the long grass and the tree-branches on the river-side.

The two rajahs on the Friday crossed to the opposite bank and had another conversation on our matter. On their return we were informed that the demand for $100,000 had become $300,000. The chief of Pongah and his followers, all fully armed, then made their appearance on the scene, while a large number of

the mountain-men from the interior collected in the neighbourhood. Things had a very blue aspect, for there was no doubt in our minds but that the rajah expected violence, and was preparing for it. We were daily informed that the next day would see all made right for our release, and when that came the old story was repeated.

The Rigas king left on Saturday afternoon with the intention of going on board one of the ships. He was the bearer of a letter from our rajah, in which he said that he did not desire money from the English, if they would comply with his request to secure him a guarantee of open ports and protection; but he was resolved, if the matter was to be settled by Dutchmen, to make them accede to all his terms Judging from his tone, our rajah seemed to be suspicious of the intervention of the Rigas king in the affair.

At 6 o'clock in the evening the rajah sent for our captain and chief cook. They had a long conversation, during which the captain proposed that he and our interpreter should be allowed to go on board, as he would guarantee the rajah that he would settle the entire business in ten minutes; also, that if he had any doubt about his returning, he would give him his permission to kill all hands, including, as he said, his own son pointing at the same time to his nephew, whom he had always represented as such. His royal highness did not assent to this proposal immediately, but dismissed

the captain, and proceeded to inhale "the spirit of Mahomet"—a fumigation, of which I do not know the constituents. However, on the completion of this ceremony, and the offering of a prayer to wind up with, he declared his intention of letting our captain and cook go, and with them our second engineer, who was seriously ill. Accordingly, the rajah, captain, and cook, set off at once for Tenom in a canoe, the second engineer being ordered to follow in the morning.

Our invalid departed on Sunday, the 9th of December, going by the river in a canoe, accompanied by the king's nephew and secretary, and a native, as paddler. Just before sunset the rajah and our invalid's escort returned, being the bearers of a note to our mate from the captain, stating that the rajah had again made further demands, and that he was proceeding to Rigas, in the Dutch gun-boat, to see if they could be acceded to.

The king seemed to be in good spirits on the Monday, evidently expecting good results from the step he had taken. In the morning he placed before us a large box of clothing from the ship, and told us each to take what belonged to us. Not a third of the articles were there; and on our other valuables we never set eyes. The rajah also brought a large stock of poultry into our enclosure, and several goats, knowing full well that if, as he evidently expected, we were soon to be free, we could not do them much damage.

On the Wednesday our second steward had a narrow escape of being drowned in a deep hole while bathing, and one of the Italian sailors rescued him. Letters and papers arrived the next day. The letters were two from the captain to our mate, one stating that our stay would be indefinite; the other, the mate informed us, was a *private* one. These letters gave us a deal of annoyance, and no wonder. Fortunately, we had the newspapers to dive into to smother our feelings.

The rajah was no better tempered than we were about what had taken place. The goats and fowls were removed from our enclosure; and he demanded that we should send a note to our captain, requesting his immediate return to the camp, and this was despatched as soon as written. Many families were seen coming up in canoes with their household belongings, and we were told that every one was leaving Lower Tenom, fearing an attack on that port. The rajah refused all our requests for better food, and seemed in a terrible rage at the non-return of the captain; and among ourselves it had a very undesirable effect, making some low and despondent, and others, to a great extent, surly and disagreeable.

On the Sunday general excitement seemed to prevail among the natives. Fire-arms were overhauled, and trenches of earth thrown up on the banks of the river below our quarters. In the conversation carried

on in groups among the warriors we could frequently hear the word "Blunna" used with great emphasis, so that we knew that the Dutch were the subject of the talk.

Christmas Eve was a miserable one for us, as we could not see one bright side to our now serious position. Christmas Day came with very little happiness or good news. Our Christmas dinner consisted of rice and a little dried salt fish, with a drink of water to wash it down. To add to our discomfort, fever and ague, dysentery and diarrhœa, were amongst us. The attacks were not very serious, but with two exceptions all had had them; and our medicines being exhausted, we were unprepared for sickness.

On Wednesday the arrival of a couple of letters from the British consul and our captain roused us a little. The former stated he had great hopes of our soon being given up. The captain explained his non-return as due to the fact that he would not have been allowed, and that he had expressed a wish to come. But he did not say if he had acquainted his friends with the conditions on which he had been released.

We were all very sorry to hear, on Thursday, that two of our British seamen had been lost on Tenom bar while attempting to cross it. Full particulars had not yet reached us, but we were sure it was a move on our behalf, and that made the occurrence all the more regrettable.

The rajah appeared a little more himself on the Friday, and condescended to speak again, telling us he would turn us up to an English man-of-war, but not to a Dutch one, without a ransom. He said the Dutch had treated him and his countrymen very badly for years back, and that the hatred felt by Malays towards these tyrants, as he called them, will never die out.

Unfortunately I was sick on the Saturday, having had an attack of dysentery since Christmas Eve. Our chief mate was taken very bad on Thursday, and fell for the moment apparently lifeless, on the floor of the hut, blood flowing copiously from him. We certainly thought the hand of death was amongst us, He rallied a little later on, thanks to a dose of medicine prepared and administered by the rajah. He appeared to be a little better on Sunday, when Tuku-Yet arrived in the evening, and confirmed the sad news of the poor fellows having been lost on the bar.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BOMBARDMENT.

Stores arrive—Return of the man-of-war to Singapore—Tenom bombarded by the Dutch—Our hurried departure—Nicholas's Escape—Pepper Hill—Flight of the Rajah—Through the forest again—The paddi barn—Spudd Hill—Bombardment resumed—Our monkey—A scare—Illness of the second mate—General sickness—The monkey liberated—Another move—Unexpected result of the second mate's pantomime—Improving our hut.

On New Year's Day Tuku-Yet came to us and inquired how the invalids were. We put several questions to him about our affairs, but he could not or would not give us any information.

A small crocodile appeared on the river soon afterwards. The rajah being informed of it, went in pursuit, but the wary animal dived before he could get near. Our New Year's Day, like the Christmas one, was very dull indeed, as we had a similar diet to sit down to, and there were no signs of improvement on the existing state of things.

We heard, on the Wednesday, that our captain and the Governor of the Straits Settlements were off the

coast in a British man-of-war; and the rajah had a few native weapons polished up to send as a present to the governor. In the evening one of the Pongah men arrived with a goat for us, and was made the bearer of the governor's present, and a letter from the king. About 4 o'clock the next afternoon, a canoe containing stores for us arrived. They consisted of brandy, wine, and quinine; but there was no letter.

On the Friday we were informed that our man-of-war had returned to Singapore, for the purpose of getting signatures affixed to some documents or treaty which had been drawn up on Thursday. She was expected to return in five or six days, and then we were to be allowed to go on board; but we had been so often disappointed, that we no longer placed reliance on men who took a special delight in witnessing our disappointment.

We were rather surprised the next morning about 10 o'clock to perceive a great commotion amongst the natives. Something serious was evidently amiss. We were not long kept in ignorance. On the departure of our man-of-war, several Dutch ships, it seemed, had arrived and placed themselves in a threatening attitude outside the port.

All the rajah's men were called in and sent off to their proper stations, and women and children came flocking up from Tenom. About an hour after receiving this intimation of the Dutchmen's intentions, orders

came to our camp to gather up our things and prepare for a journey into the interior. Our stores, baggage, and invalids were to go by the boats, the *Nisero's* small boat being used for the purpose. At first we made a little remonstrance at being so unceremoniously dragged off in the burning mid-day sun; but to show us they were not to be trifled with, one or two of the natives stepped in and seized our things, carrying them to the boat themselves. We were told that a letter had arrived, the tone of which meant business, and that the Dutch had declared their solemn intention to bombard at 8 o'clock on Monday morning should we not be given up. The rajah said he had passed his word to our Government that no harm should come to us. There was therefore no help for it. Our march was commenced as soon as we were ready, and on Saturday, the 5th of January, about 1.30 p.m., we left Upper Tenom, or, as the natives call it, Simpang Olim.

There is little to relate about our journey. The invalids, of whom I was one, went by the river, the others walked. After about an hour's travelling by boat we turned into a small stream, where we espied our companions awaiting us on the banks. Shortly afterwards we landed at our new quarters. They were on a small island formed by the stream we came up and the main river. The place was immediately christened Nicholas' Escape, owing to one of our men being nearly drowned, a canoe having capsized with him.

Nicholas was our Russian sailor, Franz Jacobson, who was always so called amongst us. Our new quarters were very lofty, being about eight feet from the ground, and reached by a ladder. All hands lived under the one roof, only a partition dividing our apartment from that of the men. The country around was very wild, and never appeared to have been under cultivation.

On Monday, the 7th of January, the Dutch, true to their threat, commenced bombarding at 8 o'clock in the morning, and kept up a sharp and heavy fire till past mid-day. From our quarters we could distinctly hear the whirring noise of the shells as they sped through the air. The discharge from the guns and the explosion were so distinctly heard as to give us the idea of really being on the scene of action.

On the Tuesday the bombarding recommenced. Evidently the ships were covering the landing of troops, as soon afterwards the brisk firing of muskets was plainly heard from the direction of the beach. One of the rajah's kranis then arrived at our camp, and, as on the last occasion, unceremoniously roused us out for a further march into the interior.

After a few hours' toiling through thick jungle and brushwood and a few ugly swamps, we at last arrived at our new quarters, which we called Pepper Hill, our hut being on an abrupt piece of rising ground, planted with pepper-trees. When we arrived, women and

children, already terrified at the bombardment, fled, shrieking and crying, into their huts; and to pacify them our guide had to go forward and explain matters.

It was a considerable time before accommodation could be procured. The first hut we were taken to was too small, and we objected to be crowded into it. A messenger was sent farther on, and soon a woman made her appearance, who spoke to our guide. He turned round and gave us orders to follow him. Our men were left at the hut, and we went on. About twenty minutes' walk brought us to our abode, where, weary and exhausted, we threw ourselves down. The house, though snug with regard to being water-tight overhead, was filthily dirty, and a heavy, sickening smell pervaded everything about it. It had evidently been built for some time, for the main supports and beams in many parts were crumbling away, and infested with detestable-looking insects.

This knock-about life greatly impaired our few stores and stock of clothing, which, at starting, was too small. As we were obliged to carry all our own goods, we gradually left them behind, for many of us were scarcely fit to carry ourselves.

On Friday, the 11th, we were again roused up by the krani, and instructed to get ready for another march inland. After a few hours' tramp through country less dense and swampy, and somewhat easier to get through, we arrived on the bank of the main

river, and met the rajah, who, having come up the river in the large prow, had just landed with his four wives, his nephews, and household effects. His royal highness was evidently bent on keeping out of the road

Battahs—Natives of the Interior.

of shot and shell, to both of which he said he was proof—and his followers believed it, or pretended to.

Here the rajah and two natives embarked in a canoe, and proceeded up the river, and as the mate and I were on the sick-list, we accompanied him. The rest walked; and they afterwards informed us they had

to cross a shocking piece of country, to which the rajah and his men were obviously strangers, where in some places the natives had to cut through the jungle with their prongs or choppers. At last we reached a spot about four miles from where we took to the canoe. On landing us, the canoe was sent across the river to meet our other men, who just then appeared on the opposite bank, and after a little delay were all brought over.

Meanwhile, a messenger had been despatched into the forest, and he shortly afterwards returned with a native who was a stranger to us. A few words passed between him and our king, and then we were told to follow our new guide, who at once entered the forest. It was now getting dusk, and our tramp was a difficult one. It wound round the side of a steep hill; presently we emerged on to an open piece of ground of about two acres in extent, and looking very swampy and unhealthy. It was bounded on two sides by steep hills, and as dense a forest as we had yet seen shut in the other sides. We were taken to a sort of shed, a mere apology for a paddi barn. There was a large stock of paddi in it at the time, and we were informed that we must make the best we could of it for the night. It was a very small shed, and would not accommodate all hands. A third of our men had, therefore, to lie on the bare ground. It did not make a great difference, however, whether we were inside or out, for the

mosquitoes in thousands kept us in torment during the night.

If help of some kind were not soon to arrive, we feared that our mate would succumb; and my own state became somewhat serious. Without exaggeration, I had endeavoured to make up my mind for the worst.

The next day, Saturday, the 12th of January, the erection of a dwelling for us was commenced on the summit of one of the neighbouring hills. We had christened our new abode "Spudd" or Potato Hill, as it was there we first came across sweet potatoes. Just before sunset we moved into our new hut—the most open and exposed place we had yet lived in. It was mere framework, with a leaf covering thrown over-head, and that left unfinished. It had, however, two good points; it was lofty and it was roomy.

On Sunday, the 13th of January, we were all suddenly aroused, at daylight, by the report of a heavy gun. While wondering if it were a continuation of the bombardment, we heard the sound of the discharge and the explosion of the shells. The firing was maintained off and on till near sunset.

On Monday several large guns were again heard, and very brisk rifle-shots, as though the firing was close by. Had the troops succeeded in getting up the river, they would have had great difficulty in rooting us out without the aid of paid spies.

On Wednesday all firing seemed to have ceased, and we concluded that the attempt to rescue us had ended in failure. The Tuesday night had been a terrible one for men to be compelled to spend in such a structure as ours. After dark a terrific thunderstorm set in, the lightning illuminating every object in the valley, and the rain falling as though it were going to beat down the temporary covering over our heads. Those who slept on the weather side of the hut got very wet. Our position was one of real hardship and misery. Day after day we had nothing but rice and water, and it was very seldom that we could procure a bit of salt to help even that down. But, bad as it was, worse was coming, of which we were fortunately then unaware.

On this day a couple of our men went in chase of a large monkey, almost as large as a mastiff dog. He coolly sat and looked at our fellows, as much as to say, "What's up now? where are you bound?" and never stirred until they were almost within striking distance. He then made a grimace at them, and made off at a speed impossible for men to equal amongst such underwood.

An incident occurred on Friday morning which greatly scared one or two of our men. They had gone as far as the river to bathe, and afterwards began hunting for bamboos, to be used for making pipes. A couple of them wandered off in the direction—as

we afterwards learnt—of the camp to which the rajah's wives and servants had fled during the bombardment. They were ignorant of this at the time; and were observed by some natives on the other side, who, to warn or frighten them, fired seven or eight shots over their heads in among the trees. Without stopping on the road, they both came running into the camp nearly dead beat, and scared out of their wits. Our guards also, on hearing the reports, were thrown into a state of excitement. They were immediately on their feet, and armed themselves, and in a few seconds were off to the scene of action. The result of this little affair was that we received strict orders, purporting to come from the rajah, that unless attended by a native we were not to leave the summit of the hill. Towards the close of the evening one of the natives brought us a female monkey which he had come across asleep, and by the application of a stout stick over the head, had stunned for a time.

On Saturday the men were amusing themselves by felling trees on the brow of the hill. The exercise seemed to do them good, and it certainly improved our quarters a little. The logs were afterwards set fire to, as night came on, and helped to keep off the mosquitoes.

On Sunday, our captive, Jennie, was set at liberty. She seemed to be more injured than we at first imagined. On being sent adrift, she did not go very

far, but perched herself close by in the lower branches of a tree.

During Monday we frequently heard heavy cannon-shots along the coast, as though our retreating friends were dropping a few on their progress northwards.

During Tuesday our second mate was taken ill. He had been complaining for several days, and in the afternoon, while standing outside the house, he fell helpless, in a fit, and was some time coming round.

On Wednesday two of our men had a shot each at two large birds, near the camp, with two old flint-lock guns, lent by our guards. The birds were missed. They were of the crane species, and were said to be good eating. The natives called them rajah birds.

On Friday, the 25th of January, we were presented with another monkey by the same man as before. He also gave us a Jennie, and we resolved to try and keep her.

The mate continued seriously ill, and we daily expected to witness that much-dreaded event, our first death. Everything we could suggest or imagin was done to relieve him; and the Spudd Hill man, as we called him, that is the one who lived on the spot, on several occasions made up a few medicines and gave us a few eggs. Having no medicine, no nutritious food, and no advice, we were left in an awkward position. Several of our men, one especially, a fireman, had severe dysentery. I had been unlucky

myself, and was recovering from my previous sickness, when, owing to exposure at night-time, and a sudden change in the weather, I took cold on my stomach, and had a relapse.

On Sunday we had words with our guards, as far as we could speak with them, about our treatment and diet, but they soon showed that they fully comprehended our meaning, and seemed uneasy at our complaints. The chief engineer and second mate desired to be taken to the rajah for an explanation, and to ascertain if he knew the condition some of us were in. The guards, however, put forward a number of excuses—amongst others, that the rajah was at Tenom. After a consultation among themselves, we noticed one of them going away, and by their manner we presumed that his business referred to our conduct in the morning.

On Monday No. 2 Jennie was liberated. After being set free, she made no signs of departure, but entered the hut and perched herself on the cross spars overhead. Like all monkeys, her first move was to get into mischief, and she opened and tore all she could lay hold of. Among other articles she seized my cap, and left the traces of her teeth on it in several places. For about an hour she amused herself in this manner, then, as if suddenly aware of her free condition, she made for the forest, and disappeared. Scarcely had we lost sight of her,

when a couple of men appeared, bringing another, caught by the same man.

On Tuesday we were informed that in the morning we would have to move again, to join the rajah down the river, and then proceed to Tenom. Most of us eagerly grasped at the bait, feeling confident that our misery was coming to a close. On the 30th of January our morning meal of rice had scarcely been finished, when our escort made their appearance, and light-hearted with expectation we set out. The mate, the captain's nephew, the second steward, and myself, being on the sick-list, went by canoe.

After a journey of about four miles down the river, we were run in on the left bank, nearly opposite the spot where we had previously met the rajah and his family during the time the bombardment was going on. Here our bundles were taken out of the canoe, and landed on the beach. This did not look very like proceeding to Tenom, as we had been informed. After a delay of about half an hour, the rajah made his appearance, evidently in no amiable mood, he having apparently been informed of our little affair with the guards. The mate tried hard to get him to consent to his going to Tenom, where he might have a chance of seeing a doctor from one of the men-of-war; but the rajah, in very surly language, refused, and gave the natives orders to pilot us to our new quarters. We started at once, and our

guides, either accidentally, or purposely to deceive us, led us astray, making our tramp more fatiguing and about four times as long as it would have been by a direct route.

At last we arrived at our destination, which was called by us Ant Hill, from the insects which abound there. Our accommodation was miserable. The rough, bare branches, placed three or four inches from the damp bare ground, were all we had to lie upon, and like the other huts the sides of this one were open, and a leaf covering in a rotten state from old age formed the roof, beneath which all hands were expected to live. We had only just landed when our companions who had walked made their appearance, besmeared with mud and mire up to their waists —the swamps being very much swollen from the heavy rains.

On the rajah putting in an appearance soon afterwards, nearly all of us went before him and spoke of the manner in which we had of late been treated. The second mate undertook to explain as best he could by signs and actions more than words, and told him that an immediate termination of our lives would be preferable to our present lingering condition. To indicate to him our desire to go to Tenom where the sea air might be more beneficial for us, he unfortunately, in his eagerness, touched his royal highness on the leg with a stick which he had in his hand.

Immediately his indignant lordship drew out his hand, and with the back of it aimed a blow at the face of the mate, who, drawing back, received it under the chin.

The rajah, fearing he had gone too far, jumped up, on seeing the second mate display a little temper, and drew his sword. Instantly one and all of the natives, fearing matters were about to become complicated, gathered round the rajah with swords and guns all in readiness. One man, who had previously shown a little kindness to us, said something to the king, and then that cowardly scoundrel departed. After getting a little refreshment, rice of course, our men set to work, and made a more comfortable sleeping arrangement by sinking fork-like stanchions in the ground and placing fore and aft spars on them. Across these we laid a kind of strong reed or rush which grew abundantly to a height of fifteen feet or more, and this we lashed down with split cane. Being of a strong, springy nature, the reeds afforded a somewhat more comfortable bed to men who had not had anything better for so long, and had not had the pleasure of knowing what it was to have their clothes off except for washing purposes.

CHAPTER VII.

ANT HILL.

Our division of labour—Chief steward ill—The water—The Union Jack demanded—Proposals for escape—Two men set out—Their adventures and return—News from the *Pegasus*—Captain Bickford and Mr. Maxwell—Stores at last—Newspapers arrive—Another letter from Mr. Maxwell—Robbery of the stores—The *Pegasus* goes away—Loscocco falls ill—Another move.

THE way in which we passed the weary hours of constant suspense and expectation was as follows. We divided ourselves into four parties, four men being on duty each day to assist in supplying water and felling and chopping up the trees for firewood. The Chinese lad looked after the boiling of the rice, and went to our guards for salt whenever we thought there was any to be had. The others who were off duty amused themselves in various ways; some made eating and drinking utensils from bamboo, and spoons from wood; others improved the condition of our dwelling inside and out, while others amused themselves with a pack of cards. The invalids had a dreary time of it. Had

we had any interesting papers or books, it would have been a great boon. Those received in Tenom had been read and re-read till we were tired of them.

On Monday, the 4th of February, our chief steward was prostrated with severe rheumatics. He ventured to get up during the night for a drink of water, and fell quite helpless almost across the fire, which was always burning in the middle of the floor to keep away the mosquitoes. The ashes of this fire we spread under our bunks to kill the ants if possible.

For a week nothing occurred beyond the daily routine of our miserable existence. Our greatest discomfort was the want of good water. The weather was intensely hot. A small brook from which we got our supply dried up, and we were thrown back on a well at the foot of the hill, the water of which, in addition to being yellow in colour, had anything but a pleasant smell. The use of such water for drinking and cooking purposes was enough of itself to breed all kinds of disease among us.

The report then current among our guards was that we were to be delivered in forty-seven days, provided the Dutch cleared off the scene, and did not further molest the rajah and his followers.

On the 9th of February one of the guards came and asked for the Union Jack which we had in our possession, stating that the rajah was going to Tenom to communicate with our people, and was afraid of being

fired on. We made them an offer to the effect that if they would allow two of our company to go with it, we would lend it, but not otherwise. Two days afterwards the young prince, who we were informed had been handed over to our side (the English) as a guarantee for our safety, suddenly made his appearance.

On Monday, the 11th, our second mate had a renewal of his fainting fits. When these came on he lost his eyesight completely, and immediately fainted away; their duration never exceeded ten minutes. Occasionally he had two in a day; then again he would pass a day, sometimes two, before a recurrence of the attacks.

It now began to be discussed if it were possible for all hands, or even a couple of us, to make our escape. To this end our chief engineer and one of the firemen set out to the river to ascertain our true position and the nature of the country. After an absence of about four hours they returned, and informed us they had not met with any very serious obstacles, although their progress through the bush had been very slow.

Not thinking it prudent to travel close to the river-bank, fearing they might be seen by natives on the opposite side, or by some one passing up and down in a canoe, they adopted a plan of striking the bends of the river. After some discussion it was decided to let a day pass without further proceedings, and then

to make another investigation in the same direction.

We felt confident that a couple of our men could be absent two or three days without being missed, as our guards did not very often trouble us with a visit, nor ever count our numbers. This we imagined to be owing to the fact that we never attempted to make our escape, and thus threw them off their guard as to our trying it when we did. Again, they were lazy and indolent, thinking of nothing else but lounging about, and spending the greater part of their time asleep. The rajah being at this time laid up with a bad foot, the guards were more careless than usual.

On the morning of the 19th of February a fireman and sailor set out after breakfast, without saying a word to any of us. The fireman carried a fishing-rod and line with him, and we thought the men had only gone as far as the swamps, no great distance from our hut, where we occasionally resorted with our simple fishing-gear, to pass away an hour or two, though we seldom caught anything. Shortly after the departure of the two a few more went to try their luck at the pools. On returning they were surprised not to find the others, as they had seen no trace of them. It immediately struck us how matters stood, the two missing men having been noticed in deep conversation up to a late hour the previous night.

The next day closed without any signs of our two men. We certainly did not attach any blame to them for trying to effect an escape; but we censured them for the underhand manner in which they went off, especially as when the project was discussed mention had been made to the effect that, if any one succeeded in getting out safely, a signal should be made by three guns being fired in quick succession. Their leaving in the manner they did left a doubt as to whether they had heard the arrangement talked over.

Between 3 and 4 o'clock on the Thursday afternoon we were rather surprised at the reappearance of our two wanderers, accompanied by a native. We feared there was something amiss on seeing them issue from the wood. The native, followed closely by the fireman, came out first; the other man, being some distance in the rear, was a couple of minutes coming into sight; and this made us imagine all sorts of disasters. Both men were in an awful condition. They were torn and bleeding from head to foot, and their clothing, torn off their backs, had been plastered all over with mud and mire.

It appeared that they had come across the native, who was perched at the top of a very high tree, not very far from our camp, although they themselves did not know they were so near. They informed us they had succeeded in getting down far enough to sight Upper Tenom on Tuesday night. Here

they lay down, intending to remain till morning, but the violence of the storm which set in prevented them from doing so, and they were compelled to keep in motion, through being wringing wet. On morning breaking, they were afraid to proceed farther, as they were beginning to feel the effects of hunger. All day Wednesday they were engaged in returning, and were close to our camp that night, but could not hit the right path. In spite of their miserable condition they lay down completely tired out, and on waking next morning were so stiff and sore as to be unable to proceed further, until some of the stiffness was got rid of by working their limbs about before starting.

While endeavouring to find the right road they espied the native aloft, and hailed him, but that individual hesitated before coming down. He, however, subsequently did so, and by signs and motions they made their wants known. All this time they had been fasting, having had nothing but a small piece of sugar-cane procured the first day. Strange to say, the native did not appear to have any suspicion of their real intentions, and accepted the statement that they had lost their road returning from fishing. The commotion in our camp consequent on the above incident had scarcely subsided when a krani of our rajah, who was somewhat of a favourite with us, having several times shown a little sympathy for our position, made his

appearance, and informed us that an English man-of-war was then lying off Bubun, and was going to open negotiations with the rajah for our release; and also that stores were on the road for us.

We were all much elated on Friday, the 22nd of February, at the arrival of a letter from Commander Bickford, of H.M.S. *Pegasus*, dated the 19th inst. He informed us that every means were being used to obtain our release, and told us to cheer up, as he had hopes of yet doing something for us; also that he was accompanied by an English gentleman, a Mr. Maxwell, who was thoroughly conversant with the Malay language and customs, and a favourite among the people. He also desired the mate to send an account of our sick, if any, and for the purpose enclosed envelopes, note-paper, and pencils. He expressed great sympathy for our position, which he said was a very hard one. This letter was a source of great comfort to us at the time, it being nearly two months since any tidings from outside had reached us.

The stores arrived on the Saturday; they consisted of biscuits, tin-meat, and soups, coffee, cocoa, and condensed milk, and also medicines, and they were really valuable to men in our position. In addition to this, great consideration was shown in forwarding the, to seamen, almost indispensable articles, pipes and tobacco. But we believe they had been greatly tampered with, in fact we caught our guards in possession of several

things that ought to have been amongst the stores. We received a few more stores on the Wednesday, apparently a portion which had been kept back.

A further supply of stores arrived on Saturday, the 1st of March, and also a bundle of newspapers, which

Our house in the Forest.

were eagerly seized on, and their contents devoured by torch-light, it being already dark when they arrived here. They were copies of the *Illustrated London News, Truth, World, Overland Mail, Punch,* and *Weekly Dispatch,* dating up to the 19th of January, 1884.

We received a letter from Mr. Maxwell on Sunday, in which that gentleman stated he had sent stores, but received no acknowledgment, nor any note as to our condition. This, of course, meant that our letters had not been delivered, probably through fear that they would say something to the discredit of our captors. This letter we answered immediately, as we had done on the previous occasion. When about to commence writing his answer, a messenger from the rajah arrived, and informed the mate that he must make his answer short, as the last one was *too big*. This looked very suspicious, especially as the letter had been enclosed in an ordinary-sized envelope, such as came to us from outside.

On Friday, the 7th of March, our Chinese lad, having occasion to go to our guards' hut, discovered a few stores that we should have received, in a corner of the floor. He said nothing, but came and informed us. Several of us jumped up at once and deliberately walked into the hut. Sure enough we found a few tins of meats and soup and cocoa, and brought them away, while the guards never attempted any resistance, but only laughed.

On the Monday reports were current among the natives to the effect that a few days would see us all right. Another small amount of stores and some clothing this day arrived, with a letter from Mr. Maxwell. The stores were much the same in quality and kind as the previous lot. The clothing consisted of straw

hat, singlet, serge jacket, and pants to match, per man. This caused no small amount of fun and diversion for the time being, in trying to suit each other with the nearest fit. Also more tobacco came and a quantity of soap, the latter being a great prize, as we had not known the use of it since landing.

In his letter Mr. Maxwell informed us that he had received our last note, but not the other. He further stated that he and Commander Bickford were now ashore and in Upper Tenom with the rajah, but cautioned us about being too confident about immediate release, as a great deal had to be overcome, our case being a very peculiar, and for us a hard, one. Anyhow, it was a comfort to know that friends were not far off.

Another lot of stores and medicines, with papers from the officers of the *Pegasus*, arrived on Friday, the 14th, and a letter came from Mr. Maxwell, dated the 12th inst., informing us of his departure from the island. He hoped to return in four or five days, but stated that it might be necessary to communicate with the Home Government, and, should a delay occur, we were not to allow it to damp our spirits, but we were to try and be as cheerful as possible, as the utmost was being done for us.

Another letter from Mr. Maxwell arrived on Sunday, the 16th of March. It was also dated the 12th, and was written just before he went away. It

was to the same effect as the other. Note-paper and envelopes accompanied this, and the writer expressed his willingness to do anything for us that lay in his power; and said that, if we desired it, we could write to our friends, putting the address outside, and he would see the letters despatched. This showed a great amount of consideration and feeling, and there was not a man among us who did not feel deeply grateful to Mr. Maxwell and Commander Bickford for their energy on our behalf.

On the Monday nearly all hands were busily writing home, though the letters were to be kept till Mr. Maxwell's return. On the 18th of March a snake about two feet long was killed inside our hut. It had been brought in among some firewood, and not till the log which contained it was put on the fire did it rouse itself out of its hiding-place.

One of our Italian sailors now became seriously ill. This man never was very strong, and always had a very consumptive appearance. He was very low and weak, sometimes rambling a great deal in his speech, and it was with difficulty he could be made to swallow a little milk or beef tea. He seems to have given up all hopes of ever getting away, in fact he said that some might live to tell the tale, but he knew that he never would.

About midnight three of our guards, fully armed, stealthily crept towards our hut and inspected the sur-

roundings. Some of us were awake, and inquired the meaning of their conduct. They replied that Bubun men were in the woods, and had been sent here by the Dutch to do away with us! We felt confident, however, that their visit had another meaning.

On the next day, Thursday, a messenger from the rajah informed us that it was his highness's wish we should reside nearer his quarters, on a small island in the middle of the river. We believed this originated in some tale told him by our guards about the previous night. They feared we would be the first to tell the king, and so thought to forestall us. The change we agreed would be for the best, though it would be hard work dragging the stores for fully three-quarters of a mile. The proximity to the water would certainly be convenient, as we had nearly half a mile to go to the river-side for washing purposes. In the morning the natives started to begin the framework of our new abode.

Our invalid Italian was daily getting worse, and all attempts to get him even to taste any nourishment proved fruitless. His whole craving was for water, which he would have drunk all day had he been allowed to do so. Long before the stores came he was gradually wasting away, but all hands being more or less in the same state from low diet, we did not think much of it. However, now that nourishing food was at hand, and he could not be prevailed on

to touch anything, not even medicines, unless they were literally poured down his throat, the change was most marked.

During Friday most of us were occupied in preparing stuff for the beds, or bunks, of our future hut, as we preferred to do that part of the building ourselves. On Saturday, the 22nd of March, the natives came early, to unstrip our roofing, which was to be used again for our new house on the island. All hands turned to, getting the things together and carrying them down. We had to do all this ourselves, and the natives stripped off the roof in the meanwhile. By the time we had everything across the river they had the roof complete on our new establishment. The Italian sailor, being very bad indeed, was carried down to the canoe on the back of one of his companions, a German, and in the same way taken to the house, which was half-way up the beach. The place was termed by us Sandy Island. It was a piece of land containing about four or five acres, and had little growing upon it except long grass.

Our hut faced the right bank of the river, the landing on the side where we met the rajah, after he fled from Tenom, being nearly opposite.

CHAPTER VIII.

SANDY ISLAND.

Tuku-Yet returns—Death of Loscocco—His burial—Tuku-Yet goes to Tenom—Reported offer from the Dutch—My own illness—The Waylah men—Our amusements—Cricket—Pebble-polishing—Easter—A pistol-shot—An elephant hunt—Great storm—Visitors—Return of the *Pegasus*—The river overflows—Stores arrive in abundance—Death of Fowler—Letters—Death of Wells—Attempt to escape—Three men get away—Captured—A new house—The rajah refuses to let us go—Death of Armstrong.

On the afternoon of Sunday, the 23rd of March, our attention was drawn towards a group of strangers on the opposite bank, evidently awaiting the arrival of a canoe to cross over to our island. They turned out to be Tuku-Yet and some of his followers; and on the Monday an occurrence of a melancholy nature took place, which greatly damped the spirits of all hands. Tuku-Yet had paid us a visit, and in his broken English was relating to us his adventures since we last saw him, before the bombardment. Suddenly our attention was drawn to our invalid sailor, over whom his Italian companion was stooping, evidently much

agitated. A glance sufficed to show that the long-dreaded moment had come, when death would make its first inroad amongst us.

It was about mid-day when the poor fellow drew his last breath. Tuku-Yet was present, and appeared to be much concerned at what had taken place. He showed

Sandy Island.

a little kindness, in despatching some of his own men for wood and linen necessary for the interment. The rajah was communicated with, as he was close at hand, in our guards' hut, but he never came.

For the time the sad occurrence gave us all more or less to do in making ready for the burial. Some were occupied in laying out and dressing our dead comrade.

Others made a coffin, which, though rude in appearance, owing to the miserable tools at our command, was under the circumstances fairly done, and fully adapted for its purpose. Half a dozen men were told off to dig a grave, which by our own choice, was made on the left bank of the river, just opposite the head of the island. Shortly before sunset we set out on our melancholy task. The coffin was carried to the head of the island, and thence we crossed the river in our own boat to the grave. The man had been a Roman Catholic, and the funeral service for that denomination was read over him by one of the firemen. His companion was much grieved. He told us that when he was at home he had been the landlord of the deceased, that they had lived together like brothers, and that he was thirty-four years old, unmarried, and had left a father, mother, two sisters and two brothers behind him.

On Wednesday, the 26th of March, Tuku-Yet left us for Tenom, to await the arrival there of Mr. Maxwell. The rajah refused to allow us to forward a note by him, evidently wanting to keep the sailor's death from the knowledge of our friends.

On the Friday the rajah sent a message to the mate, requesting him to write a note, and state how many were then sick among us. This change in his conduct probably arose from one of the firemen, who was bad with dysentery, going to him for medicine, as we had nothing to relieve him in our chest. The sight

of this man, who really looked seriously ill, perhaps produced the change in the rajah. Several of us were troubled with diarrhœa, dysentery, and rheumatics, and had not then got rid of the attacks that came on in Tenom.

On Sunday, the 30th of March, the rajah sent for our mate, and read to him a letter from the Dutch, offering the sum of $6000 to some rajah on the coast if he would come and do away with us. We believed this to be another of his abominable lies, told for a motive we could not then see into. It was not likely that the Dutch resident would put pen to paper for such a purpose.

The next day a letter was written by the mate, addressed to Mr. Maxwell, acquainting him of the rajah's voluntary information about the Dutch resident's note. We also forwarded a list of our names, and birth-places, and the letters to our friends, written on the 17th inst., and one or two more, having kept ours back until Mr. Maxwell's return, which we daily expected.

I now became very ill, and did not touch my diary until Good Friday, the 11th of April. The illness I contracted in Tenom still kept hold of me. At times I was somewhat better, but exposure to the night air as often threw me back. The hut was so open in its construction, that it afforded poor protection for us, especially in bad weather. From the

Monday up to the Wednesday night, I was very bad with severe diarrhœa and constant vomiting, and I was not able to keep down even a drop of beef tea. Fortunately I was tolerably cheerful, but, I must acknowledge, I had resigned myself to the worst, my hopes of rallying from so depressed a condition being very small. Thank God, I was now much better. All else having failed to do me good, I took a powerful emetic of salt and water. At the time I thought its violent action would finish me, but it passed off. I felt considerably improved, and shortly afterwards partook of a little food.

During the last night, three cannon-shots were heard in the direction of Tenom, and in the morning the rajah received a letter from that quarter. Rumours were afloat among our guards that the Dutch were trying to bribe the Waylah men to take up arms against our rajah, and effect our release. Waylah is a village to the south, between Tenom and Bubun. The non-appearance of Mr. Maxwell gave rise to other reports, all of which we took for what we knew they were worth. In fact, they were only set afloat either to ridicule and annoy us or to find out if we had any idea of what was going on outside. During the intervals between the letters from our people, especially if a delay occurred, we were subjected to all sorts of insults and annoyances from the rajah and his followers. But as soon as a letter from Mr. Maxwell or Com-

mander Bickford came, a complete change took place, and they were as pleasant as possible.

Some of us now resorted to cricket to pass away a few hours; we made a bat, and out of old bagging, which came round the stores, a couple of balls. Some of the others took up the search for fancy pebbles, numbers of which were to be found on the beach. These we rubbed down on another and rougher stone, finished with a smooth one, and if approved of, added to the collection. Even in these simple amusements many restrictions were put upon us by the rajah.

It was a miserable Eastertide for us. All hands, more or less, were affected by our deplorable position. Sickness damped the spirits of some, and those who were in better health, were naturally discontented and restless under the yoke of captivity and oppression.

On Easter Monday, the 14th of April, we sent a letter to Mr. Maxwell informing him of the reduced state of our stores and medicine-chest, and also of the home letters kept back awaiting his return.

On Friday, when about to retire to rest, a pistol-shot was heard, evidently coming from the next hut, which was only a few yards from ours. On making inquiries the next morning, Saturday, we ascertained that one of the natives—a guard of ours—while handling a loaded revolver, had accidentally fired it and shot himself in the leg, and another young fellow in the foot, neither wound being of a serious nature. The last of our

stores were this day consumed, and the prospect of returning once more to the old diet was not a pleasant one—especially for the invalids.

On the Saturday night a loud roaring or bellowing noise was heard abreast of our hut, on the left bank of the river, and the natives informed us in the morning that "gadgas," or elephants, had visited the district—a fact which we at first doubted.

On Tuesday, the 21st of April, a hunting party was organized among the rajah's people, to follow the elephants, which had been heard again during the night. Two of our men were allowed to go, but the rajah did not, I suppose, think it prudent to arm all hands. Shortly afterwards, three of our men crossed the river also on a hunting expedition, but of a very different kind to the other. They were going to obtain an edible flower which we used when on rice diet, and which the natives mix with their curry. The three had scarcely entered the forest when the huge hind-quarters of an elephant, quietly walking away, appeared in sight. They were not armed, and so thought it advisable to clear off.

The hunting party, who were out till near sunset, informed us that they only came across one elephant. They had had a shot at him, but owing to the dense forest, could not see if it had any effect. They saw the royal beast elevate his trunk and disappear amidst a loud crackling and breaking of

underwood. From the tracks we were told that a herd were somewhere in the vicinity.

Of late we had had heavy floods on the river. Immense logs of wood, and frequently whole trees, came sailing down the current at a rate of six or seven knots an hour. Our men while bathing swam out and brought many of these ashore, amusing themselves and laying in a good stock of firewood at the same time.

On the night of the 26th of April we experienced a storm unequalled in the memory of any one amongst us, and one of the sailors had been over thirty years at sea. It was enough to strike the stoutest with awe. The atmosphere was a mass of flickering flame, and the thunder, but a couple of hundred yards overhead, was something terrific in intensity. The rain fell as if the heavens had opened to part with their very last drop. Even the natives, used to such displays—this being an awful place for thunderstorms—were in a state of consternation. During the raging of the elements they threw themselves heart and soul into their devotions, and these loud enough to be heard in our hut between the peals of thunder. The men sleeping, or rather lying, on the weather-side of our camp, had to retreat to the other end, and sit round the fire most of the night.

Many visitors had arrived of late, bearing letters and the customary present of fruit to the rajah, but we could not ascertain the purport of their visit. Several

showed signs of wishing to speak with us, but on their approach a follower of the rajah's was sure to step up to hear all that was going on, and the strangers, on seeing this, would slip away. We still existed on rice and salt, and obtained a few bunches of bananas, though to purchase them we had to part with articles of our clothing. When the rajah ascertained this, he made the natives return everything that we had given away, and left his men to get back the bananas as best they could.

On Tuesday, the 5th of May, two cannon-shots were heard off Tenom; and on the Thursday a krani of the rajah's arrived from that port, and informed us that a man-of-war had been lying off the coast since Monday morning; but, owing to the heavy surf then on the bar, could not be communicated with. He also told us that she had proceeded to Bubun, where the shelter of the bay afforded a landing.

On Monday, the 12th of May, the river overflowed its banks, and rose higher than we had ever seen it. The highest portion of the floor of our hut was covered to a depth of four or five inches, and in the lower parts the water was a foot deep. This was rather a pleasant state of things to be obliged to live and sleep over. Of late we had been subjected to a deal of annoyance about the rice. Many times we had to wait till mid-day for our morning supply, and often till 9 or 10 o'clock at night for the evening

one. Frequently it was in a condition unfit for use.

On Wednesday, after breakfast, half-a-dozen of our men crossed the river to stamp our own rice, as we preferred to do it rather than be subject to repetitions of the annoyance.

We had just commenced our morning meal the next day, when a native came in and informed us that there were some provisions for us in a canoe. Our meal was instantly deserted by one and all, and in a very short time the contents of the canoe were landed in our hut. They consisted of boots, canvas shoes, clothes, scissors, table-knives and forks, needles and thread, matches and tobacco, biscuits, butter, pickles, pans and kettles. The rajah told us that upwards of 500 cases were on the road.

On the Friday more stores arrived, several cases having been broken open and a portion of the contents extracted. This we showed the rajah, and he pretended to be much annoyed at the theft. Early on Saturday morning the rajah proceeded to Tenom, in order, as he said, to ascertain who were tampering with the stores. Towards evening five canoe-loads of stuff arrived for us, a sixth one arriving after dark.

On Sunday two more canoes arrived, and a letter accompanied them from the Master Attendant, Mr. Ellis, of Singapore, stating that stores were on the way, and expressing a hope of soon seeing us at liberty.

To enable us to stow all the stuff inside the hut we erected a platform overhead, which, when finished, was a good substantial piece of work, and afforded room enough for the best half of the cases. A very large stock of books, periodicals, papers, and tracts were also sent.

One of our firemen, James Fowler, was taken seriously ill in the morning, and, judging by the symptoms, had cholera. He had been complaining for the previous two or three days. He spent a very bad night; his agonizing cries were heart-rending to listen to. All hands, three or four at a spell, were up to give the poor man the utmost help we could. Several times the poor fellow, who suffered terribly, fervently prayed for death. His sufferings continued till 9 o'clock on Monday morning, and then he became unconscious, and soon afterwards he died. This, the second breach in our number, was deeply felt, more especially as the deceased was somewhat of a favourite, owing to his inoffensive good-nature and his willingness to be of service when any one was ill. The funeral arrangements were the same as in the other case, but being a Church of England man, the Church service was read over him by our mate.

Shortly after our return from our sorrowful duty, the rajah sent for the mate, and handed him seven letters. Two were from Commander Bickford, one from

Mr. Maxwell; Mr. Thompson received two from his father, and our chief steward had one from his wife. According to the letters from the *Pegasus*, we believed the rajah had been keeping them back from us for several days. Their contents were much as usual, and gave no intimation as to the date of our release. Nearly all Tuesday was spent in stowing away our stores and taking stock of them, after which we nearly all wrote home; but the rajah, on being asked to forward our letters to Mr. Maxwell, replied that he had then no carriers to spare.

On Wednesday, the 21st of May, another invalid was added to our list. This was Robert Wells, the carpenter. His symptoms were unmistakably those of cholera. He had a severe night, was very bad all day, and about sunset quietly died. Matters were now becoming serious, and we all began to talk of escaping if possible. Some, more impatient than the rest, asked us to delay no longer, but start at once. But this the majority objected to, and we determined to see our dead comrade get a proper burial.

At daylight on the Friday we were all astir; some preparing a coffin, and others going off to dig the grave. Two of these, on landing at the other side, entered the wood and began to reconnoitre. They then went back to the camp and provided themselves with a few biscuits, and then again landed at the burial-ground. They were accompanied by a third

man, and informed us they could wait no longer, and were going to try and escape. Taking a glance at the half-finished grave, and without so much as an adieu, they disappeared into the forest. On returning to the camp, when our work was completed, we found the men there unaware that the three had gone, though they had been expecting something of the kind, from their having seen them in close conversation with each other.

This, of course, altered our plan of waiting till dark, as we felt confident they would in the meantime be missed. Accordingly, each prepared himself to start as soon as our comrade had received the last duty from our hands. We delayed setting out till near mid-day, and took the opportunity of doing so when our guards were at their meal. But scarcely were we well landed on the other side, than the fact of our having for the first time left the hut totally unprotected, raised their suspicions. Immediately canoes were manned, and an armed force came after us. They reached the grave just as our task was completed. Only three or four showed themselves. It was proposed to surround and disarm these, but this was objected to, as being fruitless under the circumstances. And it was well it was so, for on the way back to the boat we found the fellows lying flat in the long grass, so that every man of us had been covered from the bush with a rifle.

We had not been very long back at the camp

when one of the men was missed. He had a little more knowledge of the language than any of us, and consequently mixed more with the natives. They asked us about him, but we shook our heads. The island was immediately searched; and not finding him, the guards returned, counted our numbers, and missed two more, but could not make out who they were. In an instant the whole place was astir, and by a couple of their peculiar whoops, the banks were lined with men.

Hunting-parties were despatched in all directions, and strangers to us crossed the river and guarded our quarters. If they had any suspicion that we all intended to clear out, they never mentioned it to us.

Towards the close of the day the rajah informed us we could have the new hut which had recently been built in the middle of the island. This was perhaps due to the day's proceedings, and to a move we had made the day before, when all hands went before him complaining of our present quarters, and asking him to erect a hut on higher ground. Our new quarters, though rather small for all hands, were much better finished, and better built in every way. The hut had the advantage of being lofty, and of the floor being seven or eight feet from the ground. We took possession of it after our evening meal was over, the stores being left in the old hut till morning.

We were informed early on Saturday morning that

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our three men had been captured, but did not believe it at the time, as they had had a good start of their pursuers. A couple of hours' willing work soon transferred our stores, and saw them properly stowed on a platform about four feet from the ground, and under the floor of our new dwelling.

During the operation William Armstrong, a fireman, gave up, unable to exert himself further, and soon after he displayed all the symptoms of the disease which had proved fatal to the others. On seeing this all hands went to the rajah, and informed him of the case. The mate and chief engineer volunteered to stop with him if all the other men were allowed to go. He objected. It was then proposed that all the officers would remain, if the crew were let go. Everything failed.

While parleying with him our runaways were brought across the river in a canoe, all three being handcuffed to each other, and looking very dejected. From their account it was about an hour before darkness set in that they were captured. They had lain down to wait for night, when they intended taking to the river. One of them was hit; and a native made a blow with a stick at another, who, putting up his arm, prevented it from injuring his face. They were kept all night in their wet clothes, handcuffed together, and guarded by a native, armed with a rifle.

The rajah declared that our stores have been poisoned by the Dutch, and brought the illness amongst us;

but on being asked what was causing so much sickness among his own men—and by his account they were dying daily around Tenom—he did not answer, but changed the conversation. Our invalid was hourly getting worse; he did not suffer so much from the terrible cramp as did the first man. Towards sunset he fell into a deep sleep, from which he never awoke in this world, and passed away without a struggle about 8 o'clock.

On telling the rajah we were too crowded to be healthy, he managed to get the use of a house on the right bank of the river for the night, till our house should be thoroughly fumigated.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PARTY DIVIDED.

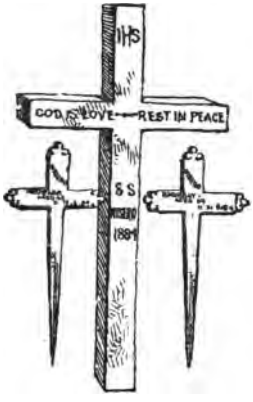
Burning of our old house—Curious native custom—Chief engineer taken ill—Native funeral—Method of burial—Death of Gerraty—Waylah men attempt to release us—Preparations to receive them—Funeral of Pan Chute's wife—Paddi-stamping—Snakes killed—Wild pigs.

On Sunday, the 25th of May, our dead comrade was buried by the side of his unfortunate shipmates. Nine of our company crossed the river, to stay for a time in the house we occupied there on Saturday night, and which belonged to Tuku-Yet. Our old domicile was set fire to and completely consumed, and in accordance with some custom of the natives, several shots were fired into the burning mass, and a man was sent to each end of the island, and fired shots over the water.

On Monday, the 26th of May, the letters written to our friends on the 20th inst. left, accompanied by one to Mr. Maxwell, giving the news of the recent deaths. On Wednesday the mate and steward crossed the river, and reported all hands well, except a fireman,

who was not showing signs of getting worse. On the Thursday we had another visit from our friends, when they came to replenish their stock of stores.

On Friday, the 30th of May, the chief engineer was taken suddenly ill, and at the time we feared for the result. He himself did not expect to recover, but maintained his cheerfulness. Towards evening, as he



Monuments to those who died.

felt better, he was removed to the other side of the river. The invalids were treated kindly by Tuku-Yet's krani, who was very attentive, and spared no trouble to make us all as comfortable as possible.

In the first week of June all hands were fairly well. Our shipmates from the other side occasionally paid us a visit, and we visited them; and this slight exercise had a beneficial effect. One of the natives, a boy about

fifteen years old, died on Thursday, the 5th of June, from cholera, and was interred about mid-day, on a spot of ground not far from our own burial-place.

This was the first funeral we had witnessed among the natives. Their method is a very rough one. The body is simply wrapped in a linen cloth, and tied round the legs and across the chest with a piece of split cane. In this manner it is conveyed to its last resting-place. At the bottom of the grave a plank of wood is laid down, the body is then lowered on to it, and two more planks are placed over it so as to form a triangle; the earth is then filled in, and all is over.

The next day another native, who was living on the island, died also from cholera. He was buried near his companion, and in the same manner. A common stone, placed at the head and foot of the grave, is all that marks the spot.

Two more of our men crossed the river, to join their shipmates on the other side. One, a sailor, was tempted to go by the good accounts of the treatment received from Tuku-Yet's krani; the other, a fireman, was not very well, and went to see if the change would in any way benefit him. There were twelve of the party now on that side, and nine of us remained on the island.

On Tuesday, the 10th of June, another death occurred. The fireman, Michael Gerraty, who crossed the river on Saturday, died very suddenly after his morning meal. It seems the poor man got up to his

coffee—since the arrival of the stores we indulged in a cup first thing in the morning, as we used to do on board ship—and to all appearance was no worse in health, but immediately after drinking the coffee he fainted, and suffered severely from cramp. In two hours he was dead. He had contracted a touch of dysentery at Upper Tenom, and never properly got rid of it. From being a great, big, heavy-bodied man, he had become reduced to a living skeleton.

We crossed the river to take a last look at the poor fellow before he was closed up in his roughly-made coffin—a native chopper, a hammer, and the few nails obtained from the cases in which our stores came, being rather unpromising tools with which to produce proper work. Though the scene of his death was a long distance from the burial-ground, and the country we had to pass through difficult for transport, we succeeded, with a little patience, in getting the poor fellow laid by the side of his companions.

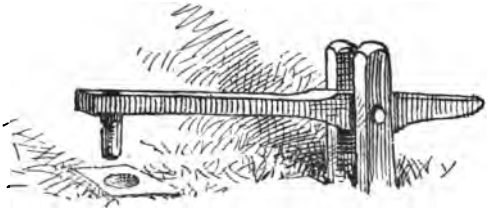
On Saturday, the 14th of June, we heard from our guards that the inhabitants of Waylah and Bubun were in the woods, on their way to attack the rajah, having accepted money from the Dutch to come and effect our release, or, as they said, to murder us. There certainly was something going on which we did not understand. Earth-forts were being thrown up on the banks of the river, towards the head and foot of the island; those at the head of the island on

the right bank, by Tuku-Yet's krani and his men; the other fort, on the left bank, by our rajah's followers. His royal highness requested us to build a barricade round our own camp, but we told him the sooner the other side made their appearance the better we should like it. He threw out a hint to the effect that it was his intention to arm us to fight for *him*. We acknowledged our willingness to accept the fire-arms, and at this he laughed heartily, knowing full well what our action would be in such an affair. This evening a letter was penned to Mr. Maxwell, acquainting him of the last death, but owing to the rajah being away, at the death-bed of the wife of one of his kranis, we were unable to get it forwarded. On his return it was handed to him, to be sent on *viâ* Bubun.

On Sunday the rajah, accompanied by a couple of his wives, arrayed in their best, went up the river in canoes, to attend the funeral of his krani Pan Chute's wife. He informed us that this man was worth upwards of $35,000, and, like a great many more Malays similarly circumstanced, was an awful miser. He was known amongst us as the Black Krani, from his dark complexion, and turned out to be the individual on whom the rajah was going to vent his wrath at Pongah for deserting his post.

On Thursday, the 19th of June, after our morning meal several of us crossed the river, to stamp paddi on Tuku-Yet's premises, it being of a superior kind

to any we could obtain from the rajah. In this operation we were assisted by some of our friends. The stamping-machine consists of a heavy beam of wood, rocking on a horizontal axis. It is worked at one end by the foot pressing it downwards and consequently elevating the other and longer end, into which the hammer or pounder is fixed. On removing the pressure of the foot the beam descends, violently bringing the pounder down among the paddi, which is placed in a conical-shaped hollow, cut out of a large block



Instrument for crushing paddi.

of wood. This process separates the rice from the husk. The next part of the performance is the cleaning. This is done by one of the natives, who are very expert at it. An oval-shaped, matted tray is taken and shaken sideways, and by bringing the fingers of the right hand at measured intervals in sudden contact with the edge, the holder gives it a peculiar jerk so as to bring the rice backwards, the husk remaining on the forepart to be thrown off. The run across the river, and the little exercise on the machine, made us

feel quite different, and by raising our spirits, caused us, for the time, to forget the serious nature of our position.

Our worst time was in the close of evening, when our minds naturally, in the quietness of the hour, returned to a subject which, if possible, we would have wished to avoid.

On Friday, the 25th of June, a large snake, about four-and-a-half or five feet long, was killed near our hut. The second mate was coming towards our abode from the edge of the river, when suddenly it made its appearance on the path before him. On seeing the danger of its position it glided towards the river; but he, seizing a heavy stick which was lying near, followed up and dealt a blow which stunned it. Instantly half a dozen of us were belabouring it with clubs. One of the guards ran up and told us to keep the head tightly pressed with a stick against the ground; and he then seized it by the tail and dragged it straight, in order to break its back.

The next day four of us crossed to visit our shipmates, and to obtain a little more rice. They informed us that about the same hour as our little adventure with the snake, they had also had one with half a dozen wild pigs. One of the men had made a small clearing among the grass, for a promenade or exercise-ground. He went out to stretch his limbs a bit, and on reaching the place discovered the pigs rooting up

the ground at the far end. He quietly withdrew to inform the natives, in order to get a couple of rifles and have a shot at them. But owing to the indiscretion of one man, who could not resist the temptation of having a peep, they became aware of their danger, and scampered away into the long grass and underwood.

CHAPTER X.

THE MONTH OF PRAYER.

The party united again—The Rajah and the conjurer—The feast—Our diving raft—More letters—Squally weather—Our duties—The crosses for the graves—Kindness of Tuku-Yet's krani—Forbidden to visit the cemetery—The quarrel about the bananas—The Rajah attacks me—The raft cut adrift—Summoned to an audience—We decline—The Rajah changes his tactics—Box from the *Pegasus*—A sailor delirious—A monkey-hunt.

On Sunday, the 22nd of June, one-half of our shipmates, who were living on the other side, crossed over to us, bag and baggage. The house which they occupied was required for devotional purposes for the period of one month, commencing on the following Wednesday. During that time the days are spent in prayer and fasting, and meals only taken between the hours of sunset and sunrise. This also concludes the native year, the last day of the devotional month being also the last of the old year.

On the Monday the remainder of our men crossed over, bringing all their belongings, including the stores. By making three or four trips with a large

canoe we soon finished the transit. Several of us could now handle the canoes almost as well as the natives. A new hut had been thrown up in front of ours, and six of the fresh arrivals turned in there, the others taking up their abode with us.

The rajah was much interested and amused with our Italian sailor, who, according to his request, went through the performance of a few sleight-of-hand tricks. It appeared he had been displaying them on the other side, and Tuku-Yet's krani had been telling the rajah about it. No sooner had he landed on our side than the rajah made his appearance, and asked him to go through a couple of them, which he did to the delight and astonishment of his royal highness, who in many ways displayed almost childish simplicity.

Their period of prayer and fasting was preceded, on the Tuesday, by a great feast. A bullock was slain, cut up, and allowanced out so much to each man, according to his rank or family. This performance was gone through in the evening, and the rajah sent us a small portion of the meat. The night was spent by the natives in cooking and demolishing their allowance of the sacrifice.

On the Wednesday morning we cooked the small present sent to us, which only afforded a taste to each. It was quite enough, for, though not unpalatable, it was awfully tough. In fact, I question whether we would have eaten it at all had we not fancied the people

were watching to see if we would really make use of it.

On Saturday, the 28th of June, we constructed a diving raft of bamboo, to replace a temporary construction, which consisted of the stem of a large tree riding by a rattan rope from an anchor made of a bag of stones on the bed of the river. But the arrangement was unsteady, and rolled a good deal when we tried to balance ourselves on it, and we resorted to the better form of the raft. We also threw up a couple of parallel and horizontal bars for gymnastic exercise.

Nothing worthy of note took place till the 4th of July, when half a dozen letters arrived, and caused the usual excitement. One was from Commander Bickford, stating that he was at Bubun, and endeavouring to obtain reliable information as to our condition, and, if possible, to establish a fortnightly messenger between there and us. In accordance with his request, we endeavoured to persuade the rajah that our detention would not improve his position with the English authorities; that now they had taken up his case they would go through with it. The rajah replied that our release did not lie solely with himself, and that others had a voice in it. This we were not surprised to hear, as we had suspected something of the kind ourselves.

According to Commander Bickford's letter, no account of the last four deaths had reached them.

The rajah, on being asked the meaning of this, replied rather stiffly that his own letters had not all reached their intended destinations. Our chief engineer received three letters: two from home, and one from Mr. Kidd, our second engineer, one of the former containing a photograph of a son born to him since leaving England. Our donkey-man also got a letter from his wife, acquainting him of the appearance of a son, they having been married shortly before we left. The other epistle was received by Mr. Thompson, from his father. In this, as in the letter from Mr. Kidd, mention was made of my relations, his mother having very kindly communicated with them. Answers to these letters left for Bubun next morning, Commander Bickford having mentioned that it was his intention to remain there seven or eight days.

The weather of late had been very severe; we were constantly being visited with violent heavy squalls, of which, being so poorly housed, we got the full benefit. The monotony of existence afforded but little food for my diary. Our time was spent in the ordinary and requisite duties of life, such as washing clothes, making and mending, reading, sleeping, out-door exercise in the cool of the evening or early morning, and cooking. The last-mentioned we all took turns at, two cooks being appointed for each day, our China boy boiling the rice, or making native curry, when we could obtain the ingredients. Several of our number being pass-

able cooks, we sometimes sat down to a very fair meal. When I say sat down, I don't mean with the comforts of a table and chairs, but sitting on a rudely-built seat, formed by fork-like spars sunk in the ground, and fore and aft ones placed on them, across which lighter ones were secured by strips of rattan. These seats, there being two, were erected under the house, in what we termed our galley.

Thursday, the 10th of July, was partly spent in the construction of small wooden crosses, for the heads of the graves of our dead comrades. These we made from the cases in which our stores came. The men's names, ages, and date of death, with the ship's name, I pencilled off; a couple of our men cut them out afterwards with their pocket-knives. Having finished this, we set to and cut some round straight branches of trees about two or three inches thick. On the upper portion of these we cut a flat surface, on to which we nailed the flat boards bearing the inscriptions. The lower portion of the spar-piece was pointed for driving down.

The rajah was asked on the Friday to lend us a canoe, to enable us to go and erect the crosses, and to fence in the ground. He at first refused to allow us one at all; but later on assented, restricting us to the erection of the crosses only. Accordingly, two of the men went over, accompanied by a guard, Masella by name. None of us had been allowed of late to leave

the island, under any pretext, without a native accompanying us.

Later, in the afternoon, one of our sailors being unwell, and our medicines seeming to have no effect on him, the rajah was applied to for a native draught. His reply was, that it was against his religion, during this month, to do anything of the kind before sunset or after sunrise. However, Tuku-Yet's krani being on the island at the time, and hearing the rajah's reply, took our steward across the river to his own habitation, and in a very short time, with a combination of herbs, produced a mixture which, though unpalatable in the extreme, had a magical effect on our invalid. Had it not been for this man I do not think we would have been allowed to erect our small tribute to the memory of our companions.

On Monday, the 14th of July, six of us crossed the river and visited the cemetery, where we made great improvements, by levelling the ground and re-moulding the graves, and succeeded in throwing up a fencing half-way round.

One of our men having exchanged a few angry words with Masella, our chief guard at the camp, that individual, who stood high in the estimation of the rajah, went and informed him that we had attacked him. His semi-civilized lordship informed us that any one of us showing signs of rebellion would have his hands tied behind his back, be thrown on the ground,

and punished with a stick, and after that would be kept in irons, and fed on rice and water.

Next morning we wanted to go and finish the work of fencing-in our graveyard. There being no canoe on our side of the river, we asked the rajah, who was then on the opposite side in the paddi-field, to allow one of the boys to drop across with one, which was then lying there; he refused, saying he would not take them from their work. We then prepared to wade across, having had to do so on several occasions before. On seeing this, and being determined to baffle us, the rajah sent a boy with the canoe, and stated that the tools we had were required in the paddi-field. And having no tools, we were of course obliged to return to camp, it being useless to cross without them. The rajah had acted so meanly towards us of late, that we had to frequently swim across the river for one or two trifles brought to the beach by Tuku-Yet's krani, or some of his men. Not being able to do what we would have desired, we set to to prepare a large wooden cross, of a monumental kind, cutting it out of the stem of a large tree which we had floated across the river the night before. This, when complete, would be more substantial, and last longer than the smaller ones we had already put up.

On Wednesday, the 16th of July, the mate, steward, and Mr. Thompson crossed the river, accompanied by Tuku-Yet's krani, to whom, for his goodness to our

invalids, we had given a couple of boxes, or empty cases,—which, I may here mention, are greatly prized by these people. One of our guards seeing them crossing the river with these things, informed the rajah. A couple of hours after this, while the rajah and myself were engaged in a game of draughts, four of Tuku-Yet's men crossed in a canoe, bringing some bananas and a couple of eggs for our invalid sailor, who was fast coming round again. His lordship refused to allow the bananas to be landed; but by a sly movement the native passed the eggs into the hand of one of our men.

The men re-crossed the river, and on landing on the other side, proceeded with the bananas higher up the bank to a canoe-landing on the opposite side, where we were in the habit of entering to swim down with the current. On seeing this movement, four of us swam over from the above-mentioned spot; but the men would not give us the bananas, and said if they did so the rajah would cut their heads off. Consequently we swam back, when, to our surprise, we saw the rajah coming towards us along the edge of the island, armed with a stick and a sharp-edged iron chopper.

One of our sailors was the first to make shallow water, and the rajah challenged him as to what he was doing on the other side. He denied having been across, and on his highness making towards him, he stepped out into deep water.

The next to land was my unfortunate self. Having landed somewhat below the king, he came to meet me, I having to pass him to where my clothes were lying. He put the same question to me, but I did not understand his meaning, and replied by the word "appa," which means "what," or "what is it." He instantly struck me with the stick he was carrying, across the legs. This was more than I could stand, and, seizing the only weapon within reach, a big stone, I was on the point of giving him it over the head, when our second mate, who was standing behind me, shouted, "For God's sake think of the consequences!" or something which sounded like that, but, being in a furious passion, I scarcely remember the exact words. I threw it down, and as well as I could told the rajah he would do me a service to strike the blow at once, as I would prefer death sooner than be subject to his half-civilized tyranny, and the lingering existence we were leading.

A portion of my utterances he understood, as we afterwards learnt. Just then one of our guards ran up, with sword drawn, alongside the rajah. I asked the rajah to allow me to have the sword, that I might at least be on an equal footing with him. This brought his rage to a climax. He was defied before his men, who stand in terrible awe of him. His countenance assumed a most fiendish expression, and with all his might he dealt me a blow across the shoulder with the

blunt edge of the iron chopper. Not being very strong at the time, it nearly brought me to my knees, and coming from a man about six feet high and built in proportion, it was not a very light stroke. My passion had so risen as to make me utterly reckless, and folding my arms, I begged him to finish his work. He eyed me savagely from head to foot, and then turned and walked off. It was not till then that I knew he had used the blunt edge of the instrument. The injury to my shoulder was not so bad as was at first expected, in fact some of our fellows who were looking on told me they had to close their eyes, thinking I was a dead man. The bruise, which swelled considerably, gave me a good deal of inconvenience, as it affected my arm a little.

Shortly afterwards Tuku-Yet's krani came across with our men who had gone over in the morning. The rajah sent for him, and told him any weapons he had given our fellows during their stay in his house he was to go and get back from us, and sarcastically added that he had better arm every one of us. To see that they were given up, he sent a guard along with him. The good-natured fellow seemed much grieved about it, and said it would not do for him to begin a disturbance with the rajah, in the absence of his own master.

On turning out next morning we found our raft had been cut adrift, and a couple of us set to work and

hauled the anchor up on the beach, so that it would be staring the rajah in the face, as a reminder of his noble deed. Our China lad, having occasion to go to his lordship for rice this morning, was sarcastically told to go to "engineer teega," meaning the third engineer, as he was "rajah sato," meaning No. 1 rajah, and he would get rice from him.

On Friday, the 18th of July, the rajah sent a messenger to us, requesting all hands to go before him, but as the majority said he knew where to find us if he required to speak with us, no one went, except our mate and a sailor, Martin, who did most of the interpreting; and they did not go until the rice had been refused a second time. But then, not knowing how soon we might again be depending on him for food, the mate thought it unadvisable to be too stiff with him. After a long chat about what had occurred, and a few remarks as to what he thought of me, none of which would be much to my credit if true, he not only gave the rice, but an extra allowance of it, and in addition a couple of pumpkins and cucumbers. But no argument could make him realize my position in the affair; he was, of course, the only one aggrieved. He wanted to know why the mate did not cut my head off for acting as I did! He thought he should hold the same sway over us as he does over his unfortunate subjects.

The next evening, while at supper, an envelope,

addressed in Malay and underwritten in English, from the Hon. W. E. Maxwell, was brought to us by a native and handed to the mate. On opening it he found it to contain a long, narrow strip of paper, with a number of unmeaning lead-pencil strokes across it, with here and there an attempt at forming English letters. This we supposed to mean that the rajah was in the possession of letters for us, and probably thought we would at once humbly flock round him to obtain them. However, we resolved to disappoint him, and, as he had already kept letters back from us, let him do the same with these if he felt disposed to act so disagreeably.

Just after breakfast on the Sunday morning the rajah sent for the mate, handed him over a box, or rather case, from Commander Bickford, and expressed a wish to see it opened. The mate asked him to step up to our camp, where we would show him the contents, but he would not condescend to that arrangement, and so the lid was forced.

The contents were a small addition to our store of tea—we having made mention of this in our last note to the *Pegasus*—an addition to our medicine-chest, and a couple of bolts of flannel, with the requisite articles for shirt-making, all of which were most acceptable. Accompanying these was a large bundle of home and foreign papers, always a great source of pleasure. The captain's letter contained no definite account of when our liberty would be obtained, but,

like the former ones, tried to cheer us up as much as possible, and expressed great sympathy for our position.

On Monday the majority of our men were engaged in working up the flannel, turning it into underclothing and cholera-belts; sailor-like, the majority were no mean hands at that kind of work. Our invalid was much worse again; we thought he had been too venturesome in getting about so soon. Towards evening he became delirious, knowing no one around him. While in this pitiful condition he would frequently indulge in prayer, then suddenly breaking off, he would point at some of us or at an imaginary object, and burst into a hearty fit of laughter, while at other times he would exhibit great fear from some unseen cause.

Next day, having obtained the rajah's consent, a couple of our men, accompanied by Masella, set out for Tuku-Yet's place, to obtain medicine for our sick man, who towards sunset showed signs of improvement, but, naturally, was much prostrated.

On Wednesday, the 23rd of July, all hands were aroused early by a commotion among the natives, who, we found, were hunting, and in a most brutal manner slaughtering, a large batch of monkeys, which had paid a visit to the paddi-field, where they do a deal of harm. Their plan of action was to get in the rear of the animals, and drive them into the river; and there a number of natives—the rajah being

foremost in the brutal sport—awaited their arrival. Some of the poor creatures took shelter in a couple of trees which had been left standing on the banks. Here they were followed, and the branches cut from under them, and, falling into the river, were soon despatched. Until our appearance on the scene not one had been spared. However, the remainder, twelve in all, were secured and given to us without much inquiry, and we took them to our hut.

Thursday, the 24th of June, finished the native period of prayer and fasting, and, as at the beginning, another bullock was slain and distributed, the rajah sending us a small portion.

CHAPTER XI.

NEGOTIATIONS.

The New Year of the Malays—Tuku-Yet arrives—Our large cross finished—Rajah Omoh arrives—Portrait-drawing—The Rajah declines to send us to Acheen—A little music—Visitors from Bubun—The Rajah of Bubun—Stores from Analaboe—Men-of-war at Bubun—The conditions of ransom—Tuku-Yet arrives—His influence—Murray falls ill—Death of Bibby—Death of Murray.

FRIDAY, the 25th of July, was New Year's Day among the Malays; men, women, and children being arrayed in their best, which consisted of as many gaudy colours as they could assume, hanging loosely about the head and body. The juveniles kept up a constant and lively beating of tomtoms, which to them may have a musical sound, but to us was far from being a source of pleasure. Visitors from all quarters arrived all day long, each and every one going first to the rajah and paying him the customary salutations due to his rank. When they had got through with that, they next paid us a visit, gathering round our camp in large numbers, viewing and commenting on the unfortunate ship's

company whom cruel fate had thrown into their hands.

We are informed that for three days not a stroke of work is performed amongst them. Tuku-Yet, whom we had not seen since the 24th of March, when our Italian died, arrived on Saturday, the 26th of July. After a long chat with the rajah he paid us a visit. Little or no information could be obtained from him beyond what we already had learnt from the papers sent to us. He was either ignorant of what was going on, or had received instructions to keep silent. But we could always obtain more information from the rajah himself than from this man.

He left on the Sunday, and was the bearer of a letter from us to the *Pegasus*, and also letters from us to our relations. On the Monday, having obtained consent from the rajah, we once more visited our little cemetery, accompanied as usual by our indispensable guard, Masella, where we succeeded in completing the work previously commenced, and otherwise improved the surroundings, giving the place quite an air of civilization compared with its former appearance.

On Wednesday, the 30th of July, the work of getting our large cross completed was resumed. A saw, which we badly wanted, was obtained. It was one from the wreck, and originally belonged to our poor carpenter. While Tuku-Yet was with us we got him to make the rajah understand that it was the custom

of English people to respect the memory of the dead as far as it lay in their power to do so. He had raised every obstacle he could think of to prevent our efforts in that direction, and even told us that what we were doing was "no good." Our invalid now showed signs of recovering, but it had been touch-and-go with him.

The next day, the last of July, we completed our large or monumental cross, and, considering our appliances, made a very satisfactory job of it. Into the upper portion we cut the letters "I.H.S." On each arm we put a short Scripture text, viz. "Rest in peace" on the left, and "God is love" on the right arm. The words "In memoriam" were in the centre in a line with the others. On the lower part, between the cross-piece and the ground, we cut "S.S. *Nisero*, 1884." These inscriptions, being deeply inscribed, will last a considerable time.

On Saturday, the 2nd of August, having obtained the use of a large canoe, and accompanied by a guard as usual, we crossed the river to erect our cross. This we soon got fixed, placing it between the foot of the Italian's grave, which is the middle one, and the fencing. We also made other improvements outside the fence, clearing away long grass, underwood, and fallen tree-branches, so as to have the spot visible from the head of Sandy Island.

On Sunday the rajah's brother-in-law, Rajah Omoh,

arrived, accompanied by a dozen native attendants, from Rigas, a port northwards of Tenom. Our rajah and his staff arrayed themselves in their best, to receive the evidently important visitor, who, I may mention, was a young man not more than nineteen or twenty years old. He had a very intelligent appearance, much above the ordinary run of the natives, and in many of his ways and manners seemed quite civilized.

On the Monday a couple of the Rigas king's followers paid us a visit. Like their master, they exhibited more intelligence in every way than those by whom we were surrounded. They were much pleased with our illustrated papers, especially the pictures relating to the Soudan campaign. These they comprehended the meaning of at a glance; not so our rajah's followers, who would turn the pictures in half a dozen positions before seeing their drift. On showing them a sketch I had made of the Pongah chief, one of them let me have no rest until I had a try at his features, the result of which was a hearty laugh among his companions at his expense. He was by no means attractive, and as my sketch did anything but flatter him, the merriment it produced among them was loud and long. These men told us if our affair did not soon come to a crisis we would probably be taken to Acheen, where they said there were upwards of one hundred Europeans, and that the latter were anxious to have us there. Acheen was said

to be provided with better accommodation in the way of dwellings, and the means of obtaining provisions. We thought the visitors were on a mission from the Acheen king to endeavour to get hold of us, but we did not imagine for a moment that our rajah would let go his hold so simply.

Our visitors called again on Tuesday, and one of them expressed a wish to hear us sing, saying they were fond of English music. They had most likely heard us on Sunday evening when they arrived, closing the day with a few hymns, as we usually did. One of them sang a song in Acheenese, composed on our shipwreck here. They expressed themselves similarly to the rajah on our case, to the effect "that it was the work of Allah that we should come here to be a means of getting their troubles with the Dutch brought to an end." One or two of them have hinted that the ship was sent here by the English rajah.

On Thursday the visitors departed, and from information gleaned from a half-witted native, we learnt that the king had refused to allow us to go to Acheen. This we were not sorry for, as none of us were in a condition to face a march of ten or twelve days' duration.

On Monday, the 11th of August, there came another batch of visitors from Bubun, numbering five-and-twenty men, and next day we learnt that the visitors were the acting Rajah of Bubun, his son, and body-

guard. The royal visitor and a couple of his followers paid our cemetery a visit, but did not come near us. The head Rajah of Bubun is at times quite foolish, and this man did all his business transactions for him.

The visitors left on the Wednesday, and were the bearers of letters from us to our friends, also of one to the *Pegasus*, stating the reduced condition of our stores, the three months for which they were supposed to last having expired, though, had we received all, they would have lasted much longer. The loss of thirty cases greatly crippled the supply.

On Friday, when about to turn in for the night, a messenger from Tenom arrived with a case of medicines and some more flannel. These had been sent by the Resident of Analaboe, a Dutch position between Tenom and Bubun. A couple of letters accompanied these articles, one for our mate, the other for the steward, both from their wives. The rajah received three letters, two from Mr. Maxwell, and a third from the Dutch. Tuku-Yet, the rajah informed us, received another, requesting his presence in Bubun. This individual, being in Tenom, sent his letter to our king, and, according to the latter, awaited instructions from him. We were informed that an English man-of-war and two Dutch ones were then lying in the bay at Bubun.

On Saturday the rajah sent a messenger to our camp about mid-day, requesting an interview with the mate,

who went. The king informed him of the contents of his letters, stating that an offer of $40,000 and open ports at Tenom and Pongah had been made, and that it was his intention to accept the same. The mate asked him if he would stick to his word. "Yes," he replied, "if they keep to theirs." He certainly appeared to be in the highest of spirits over the then state of matters. To the astonishment of us all in the evening, he entered into a little cricketing with a couple of the men. Up to the previous night he had been as ugly in disposition towards us as he very well could be.

Tuku-Yet arrived in the evening from Tenom, to ascertain the rajah's decision on the letters he had received, and then to proceed to Bubun. We had a long chat with him, and, like the rajah, he expressed himself confident that all would soon be wound up, and our liberty secured. He told us all that he could do he would do, in order to finish this "bad bisness," as he termed it. He seemed very ambitious to obtain a Victoria Cross from our people, and frequently mentioned this in his conversation. He was a more knowing customer than the rajah, having seen more of the outside world, and we really thought the rajah's every action was guided by this man's counsel. Early on Sunday morning Tuku-Yet, with his krani, and ten natives, left for Bubun. In response to a request of Tuku-Yet's, the mate gave his krani a few lines testifying to his goodness towards us during the stay of our men in

his house, and his many acts of kindness towards our invalids.

On Monday, the 18th of August, two of our men were taken suddenly ill. One, a German sailor, was attacked with severe fever and ague; he had been subject to this for some time, but had never been brought so low before. The other poor fellow, Robert Murray, second steward, had the terrible disease which had already carried off four of our number, and, as in the case of the others, a couple of hours produced an awful change in a man who, up to the day before, was apparently enjoying good health. Severe diarrhœa and incessant vomiting had reduced him to a condition from which little short of a miracle would restore him. On Murray being taken so ill, we asked the rajah to send a messenger to endeavour to obtain, if possible, medical aid. He promised to do so, but we were confident up to a late hour at night that our note had not left. He informed us in the morning that it had gone.

On the evening of the 19th of August, sad to relate, another victim was added to the list, viz. Thomas Bibby, fireman. His symptoms were precisely the same as those of the other man, except that he suffered more from cramps in the abdomen, legs, and feet. The havoc the disease made on a man in such a short time was fearful to witness.

On Wednesday our sailor was once more on his feet, but very weak; but not so the other men. The fire-

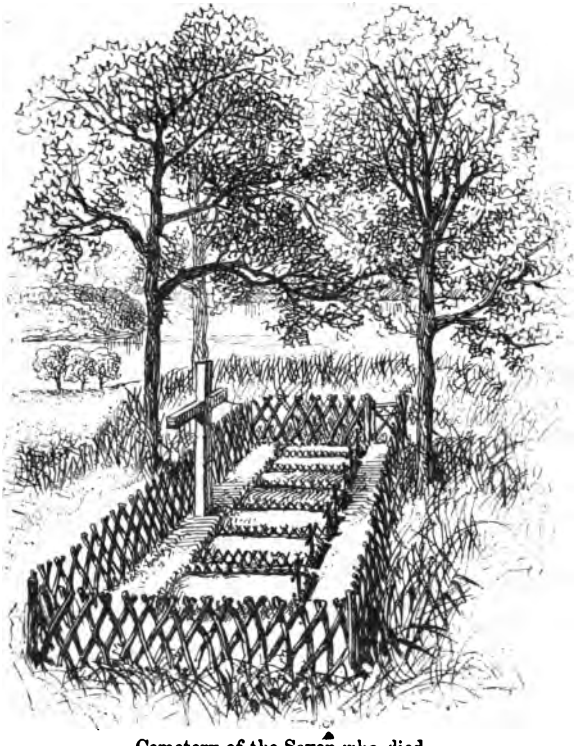
man spent a bad night of pain and suffering, his sight and hearing being much affected. This sudden visitation of sickness cast a great gloom over a camp which, a couple of days before, hoped to hear nothing but favourable news. Such had been our life ever since landing. No sooner had our spirits been raised by a little good news than something came to crush them lower than before.

Thursday, the 21st of August, was the most eventful and melancholy day we had yet experienced in Sumatra. After a severe and painful struggle our invalid fireman expired about noon. The rajah showed a little more feeling in this case than he had ever yet done, by having materials for the coffin sent up to the camp, and the boat put in readiness for conveying the poor fellow to his last resting-place.

Scarcely had we returned from burying him when poor Murray succumbed, passing off very quietly at the last. We thought it trying when three were taken from us in less than a week, but two in one day was enough to depress the stoutest heart. Both these poor fellows were married, and left families to mourn them. This made our loss by death seven, and four of them were married men, and all had left Liverpool with us.

On Friday morning we buried the second steward, it being too late in the evening to get the coffin put together and everything finished before dark. He

was laid by the side of his shipmates about 10 o'clock, our little cemetery now being well filled, the Italian, the first to die, still retaining the centre grave. The



Cemetery of the Seven who died.

order in which the poor fellows lie is as follows, the number representing the order in which they died :—Thomas Bibby (6), Michael Gerraty (5), William Arm-

strong (4), Cosmo Loscocco (1), James Fowler (2), Robert Wells (3), Robert D. Murray (7).

The rajah informed us he had sent a letter to Bubun, stating the recent deaths amongst us, and told us that any who liked might go over and stop in Tuku-Yet's house for the night. Five of our company availed themselves of the offer, and, except the Italian, who was awfully nervous about the sickness now among us, returned the next morning. The house in which the poor fellows fell ill we burned to the ground, and we fumigated our own with smoke, taking all the precautions in our power to drive out our terrible foe.

CHAPTER XII.

TUKU-YET'S DIPLOMACY.

The suspended lemon—No news—The last offer—Seven of us visit Upper Tenom—Changes due to the bombardment—Etam Abis—Anxiety of the rajah—Erection of more crosses—Tuku-Yet's report—The Italian goes to Tenom—The war-ships off Tenom—Heavy firing—The Rajah of Kotapang-passir—Our rajah's mother intervenes.

On Saturday, the 23rd of August, owing to some peculiar notion, superstitious or otherwise, the natives suspended a lemon before the entrance of our abode as a charm against sickness. Tuku-Yet, his krani, and a strong body-guard, arrived from Bubun, having been on board H.M.S. *Pegasus*, where they met Mr. Maxwell, Commander Bickford, and the Governor of Acheen. They brought a letter for the rajah, but none for us. Nor could we get any information as to how matters now stood; and from what Tuku-Yet said, the answer the rajah gave to his letter would have a great deal to do with our speedy relief or longer detention. Newspapers and a copy of the *Netherlands*, Nos. 1 and

2, were sent to us. We were also informed that stores and letters would arrive in a day or two.

As all hands had looked forward to good news on this man's return, we were sorely disappointed. We at least had hopes of obtaining medical assistance of some kind. It was a serious position to be placed in, face to face with sickness and death, without any help in the way of advice, or knowledge of how to deal with the many ailments to which we were exposed.

On Monday, the 25th of August, Tuku-Yet left with letters from the rajah for the *Pegasus*. His krani, Tuku-Heim, was to join him next day at Tenom, and go on with him to Bubun. Shortly after Tuku-Yet's departure we were handed over some letters and a case of stores. The letters were, three to the mate, from Mr. Maxwell and Commander Bickford, expressing great hopes of soon being able to obtain our freedom; one for Mr. Thompson from his father; and a few for myself, these being the first I had received from my relations since leaving Soerabaya. Later on in the evening the rajah, who appeared in good spirits, and was very agreeable just then towards us, informed us he had consented to the conditions, viz. $40,000 and open ports, and we were to be handed over to a British vessel.

We were afterwards informed that this was the last offer to be made him, and that Mr. Maxwell had given him till the 29th inst. to return his

answer, which, if not satisfactory, would have ended all negotiations, and brought a combined expedition ashore to punish him. We were of opinion that Tuku-Yet had met with some disappointment, as he was far from being as pleasant as in the past. His answers to the questions put to him were very short and snappish.

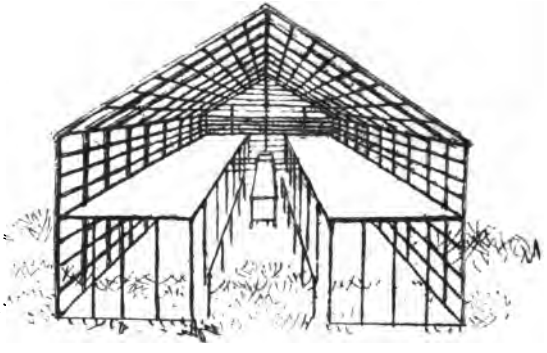
On Tuesday, the 26th, Tuku-Heim and nine natives left in the morning to join their master in Tenom, previous to proceeding to Bubun. They were the bearers of letters from us to the *Pegasus*, and also letters for home.

Next day, on the mate asking the rajah why the stores which had been forwarded did not arrive, his royal highness decided on going as far as Tenom to ascertain the cause of the delay, and offered to take any of us who felt disposed to have a trip down stream. Seven of our company availed themselves of the opportunity, and left soon after in a large canoe, accompanied by the rajah. They returned about 4 o'clock in the afternoon with several cases of stores. Two or three canoes left Tenom nearly an hour before them. These they overtook and passed. While passing, the rajah made fun of his own men, and told our fellows if they had better knowledge of canoeing, none of the natives would be able to compete with them, as the strength was on their side.

According to their accounts, great changes had

taken place round Upper Tenom since we left it. The place had been greatly damaged by the Dutch during the bombardment. Rice-fields, pepper plantations, banana and cocoa-nut trees, shops, and bazaars (big shops after their fashion), had sprung up all round. During our sojourn there the place could only boast of a few huts.

It was the opinion of our men that an attempt by



Interior of Hut, with Frames of Sleeping-Bunks.

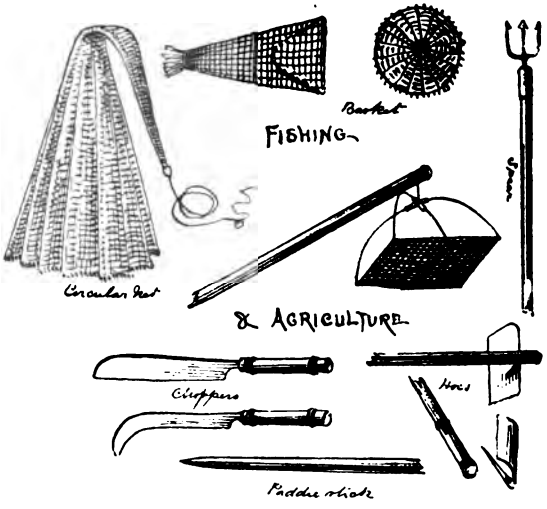
night to escape by the river would, in all probability, be attended with failure, as the obstacles to be overcome were numerous, and it required good daylight to steer clear of them. The rajah showed the men a large shell which had not burst, and which had dropped close to our huts where we had been living, on a spot of ground frequently occupied by the king himself when we were stopping there.

On Thursday, the 28th, we received a few lines from Mr. Maxwell, expressing great sorrow at the news of the last two deaths, at a time when deliverance was so near at hand. The carrier who brought it said he passed Tuku-Yet on his way to Bubun. The rajah also received a letter from Etam Abis, an official whom the rajah had been endeavouring to get expelled from the island. This letter he read to the mate, and explained its contents, which, according to his translation, contained a desire on the part of that individual to assume a friendly relationship with the king. He also told the mate that he had forwarded a verbal message to him, saying that after the departure of the Englishmen he would answer his note. He also said that when we were all gone, those who once dictated to him would be coming with their humble salutations, but he added, "I know how to deal with them."

The rajah seemed almost as anxious as we were for the end, and asked several of us what date of the month it was. This we of course afterwards learnt was the result of his anxiety about Tuku-Yet getting to Bubun before the expiration of the 29th, the day given him to reply. He had cautioned us, should any strangers make their appearance, to be on our guard, as there were plenty around him who would not scruple to murder some of us in order to complicate matters for him with our people.

On Saturday a few of us paid our last visit to the

cemetery, to erect crosses on the two new graves similar to those already at the head of the others. On Sunday, the last day of August, Tuku-Yet arrived from Bubun, and informed us all had been made right for our release, and it only remained to settle a little mistrustful feeling on the part of the rajah as to



Native Implements.

how we should be given up. He wanted the money first, while our people wanted us. He also stated the *Pegasus* was now on her way to Tenom. The weather having moderated for the past few days, our people were going to try and take us out by the latter-mentioned port, to avoid, if possible, the fatigue of enforcing

a long march on us. For this purpose they were to call at Analaboe on the way here, to obtain a good surf-boat and a few native hands who were thoroughly accustomed to its management, and might be expected to arrive off the mouth of this river some time the following morning. Tuku-Yet also stated that Mr. Maxwell had offered to come ashore and stop till all hands had been shipped, if that would convince the rajah of his intention to act honourably by him. At sunset Tuku-Yet returned to Tenom, taking with him our Italian sailor, who was on the sick-list with severe bronchitis, the rajah having consented to his going.

On Tuku-Yet expressing a wish to have a testimonial signed by all hands, we drew up the following:—"We, the undersigned, being the survivors of the crew of the late s.s. *Nisero*, present our thanks to rajah Tuku-Yet for any influence he may have brought to bear on our case for our benefit, and hope he will receive suitable reward for having done so."

On Monday, the 1st of September, the rajah left for Tenom, accompanied by our mate and Martin, our sailor interpreter. According to the king's account, some one had been poisoning Mr. Maxwell's mind against him, and he was taking them to undo any mischief which might have been caused by the tales that had been carried, though they were probably not very far from the truth. Some of our men objected to the mate going, but the rajah said we need not fear a repe-

tition of the captain's affair, as he would look out for that himself. Shortly after their departure we heard a heavy gun fired off Tenom, which Tuku-Yet had told us was a signal of the arrival of the *Pegasus* at that port. But he never said it was also a signal, as we learnt afterwards, that all hands were to be brought out on the beach within sight of the ship.

About 9 p.m. the mate returned, not having been further down than Upper Tenom, as the rajah could not be prevailed on to proceed. Tuku-Yet arrived there before they set out to return to us, and said that, owing to an increase of surf, no landing could be effected that day; also that he had had the Italian parading the beach, in order to be seen from the ships, of which he said there were three—two Dutch, one English.

He gave the mate a letter which had come through from Bubun, dated 30th ult., from Mr. Maxwell, who stated he had every hope of having us on board in a few days; and, should landing at Tenom prove a failure, he would proceed northwards to Katapang-passir, and communicate from there. Up to a late hour we were told the ships were still lying outside, evidently waiting for morning to see if any improvement took place in the surf.

In the early part of Thursday several heavy guns were fired off the coast in a northerly direction, which caused a deal of uneasiness among the natives, the

rajah himself anxiously inquiring from us if we could assign any reason for it. A krani of Tuku-Yet made a special journey across the river to ascertain the meaning of them. We could only suggest the possibility of the crews being at target-practice.

On Friday evening the Rajah of Kotapang-passir and about twenty followers arrived on a visit to our king, and were received by him in a very cordial manner. He left his hut and advanced to meet them on the river bank, a condescension on his part, seldom exhibited but to very important personages. The visitor was a very youthful-looking individual, not more than twenty years old.

On Saturday Tuku-Yet arrived, having two letters for the rajah, one from the English, the other from the Dutch, and also a few lines from Mr. Maxwell to us, stating the safe arrival of the Italian on board, and that $2000 had been paid down for him, and that the balance, $38,000, would be forthcoming on our being given up. He also stated that the Hollanders had objected to his proceeding overland to Tenom.

After a considerable amount of talk between the three rajahs, Tuku Imam Mouda, Tuku-Yet, and the Rajah of Kotapang-passir, they came to the decision that they would forward the sailors, firemen, and Mr. Thompson, while the three mates, chief engineer, and myself remained until the balance of the money had been paid.

Later in the evening the rajah's mother sent for the Rajah of Kotapang-passir, and had a long talk with him, at the conclusion of which they crossed the river to our island, and had another chat over our affair. The old lady then invited Tuku-Yet to tea with her, and, according to that individual, laid down the law pretty stiffly to him about having our case brought to a close. A similar dose she administered to her son the rajah. About 8 p.m., after another consultation between the three rajahs, they decided to take all hands on to, or near, Kotapang-passir. This, by the way, was the old lady who, on our being wrecked, wanted to know why we had not all been killed; but, on her son informing her we were an English ship's company, had given orders that any cooking utensils or other articles of a similar nature that could be spared were to be put at our service.

Tuku-Yet left here soon afterwards, to acquaint Mr. Maxwell of the rajah's decision, and to prepare him for an interview with his most important majesty. At 10 o'clock at night we were informed that the next day had been decided on for our departure. A remarkable trait in the Malay character is that they are slow and cautious at coming to a settlement in business matters, but once arrived at, are proportionately quick in carrying it into execution.

CHAPTER XIII.

FREEDOM AT LAST.

Preparations—Upper Tenom—Our escort—Crossing the river—The rajah again excited—Back at the palace—Visit from the Chief of Pongah—Our last look at the *Nisero*—The Kousaby—A huge canoe—A cart—A breakfast in the bush—Five men set free—The native women—Rajah Apanama—The last day of captivity—Friends—Our welcome—Safe on board the *Pegasus*—A word of thanks.

On Sunday, the 7th of September, by 8 o'clock, all hands were in the height of confusion and bustle, making ready for departure, the rajah having signified his intention of starting after his morning repast. The scene within our hut would have made a very interesting and comical picture for an artist's pen—some arraying themselves in old clothing which it would be impossible to drag with them the distance they had to go; some getting into the great, heavy War Department boots, cutting most ludicrous figures, and making miserable attempts to walk, reminding us of our youngsters at home in their first attempts on a low pair of stilts.

After a considerable amount of delay on the part of the rajah, we started about half-past 10 o'clock. All hands, except the mate, chief engineer, and third mate, went in our own ship's boat. These went in a canoe, accompanied by the rajah, one of his kranis, and a native. A native, armed, accompanied us in the boat.

The only adventure of any note was the stranding of our boat in a shallow part of the river, all hands having to get out and drag her off into deeper water. After two hours' running down with the current most of the way, and through richly-wooded country, in some places of a very interesting nature, we arrived at Simpang Olim, or Upper Tenom, as we have always termed it. Here we were detained for a few hours, during which the rajah collected the escort which was to accompany us on our march.

I should imagine upwards of 400 natives joined us here. After having a run round the village, and a visit to the native fort which had been thrown up prior to the bombardment, we settled down to a little refreshment. Before leaving we made a bargain with the natives, one of the rajah's kranis transacting the business, to get our bundles carried for three dollars each; and it was well we did so, for I am sure there would not be many amongst us who would have held on to them very long. We left here about a quarter-past 3 o'clock, marching through bush and swamp to Lower Tenom, reaching there at 4 o'clock

in the afternoon. Here the river had to be crossed, as I before mentioned in the account of our march from Pongah to Tenom. Having only one canoe at our disposal for a long time, the transit occupied several hours. On the arrival of a second canoe the work went on a little more rapidly. While delayed here another large body of natives joined us, making our escort amount to upwards of 700 or 800 men; this large force was most probably taken for the purpose of getting the money brought safely back, the rajah being very mistrustful of outside tribes. The Rajah of Kotapang-passir and his followers also formed part of our force.

A strong body of the rajah's own followers went over the river, and we were the next to follow, accompanied by No. 2 and the Rajah of Kotapang-passir. We succeeded in getting across before dark, and, as before mentioned, had to ford a creek waist-deep to gain the point of the seashore, from which we had obtained the first glimpse of Tenom. On making this spot we found several large wood fires had been lighted by the natives, and around them we sat until half-past eight. Darkness having set in, those who had not crossed were compelled to await the rising of the moon. When all were across the order to move on was given, and the march which we had already traversed months ago, though it appeared years to us, was again resumed.

About half-way to Pongah we overtook Tuku-Yet, who was waiting, it appeared, for a letter which the rajah handed to him for Mr. Maxwell. On getting it he set out at once, while we halted for about half-an-hour's rest. Very little of interest occurred on the route, except a little diversion in the shape of a monster turtle, which the natives tormented as they passed. Towards the end of the journey one of our men gave in under the severe marching through the sand; but he was afterwards brought on by the natives in the rear. We arrived at Pongah river about 2 o'clock on the morning of Monday.

On Monday, the 8th of September, an incident occurred here which displayed the shallow-minded things of which the rajah could be guilty, it not being the first time he had shown himself in the same colours before us. It happened that several of us had landed on the banks of the Pongah river before the rajah had come up. We were not aware of this, and seeing two canoes at work taking men over, and knowing we had to cross, the second mate, myself, and our cook entered a canoe, not, however, until the native in charge had made signs for us to do so. Scarcely had we landed on the other side when a messenger, sent by the rajah, followed, and ordered our return. The rajah in the meantime made a tremendous fuss with the mate at our presumption in going before him, and would listen to no explanation of how matters stood with regard to the

mistake. In order to let us know and feel we were still in his power, he kept us in our soaking wet things for over two hours in the chilly night air, before allowing us to cross into the village.

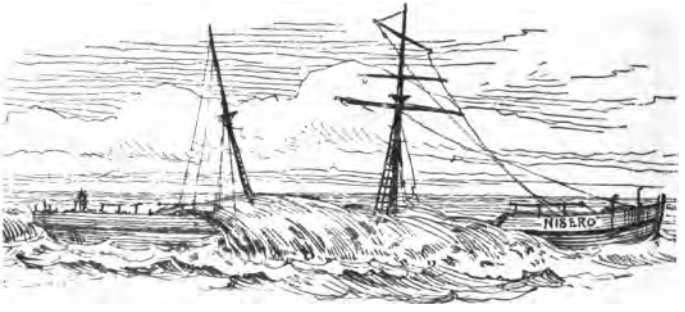
Almost dead with fatigue, and wringing wet, we once more entered the hut in which our life in Sumatra had begun. We could not obtain our bundles, so we were compelled to make the best of things as they stood. I was thoroughly knocked up, and lay down on the floor just as I arrived.

In the hut we remained all day, and the little rest, though not a very comfortable one, owing to our wet clothes, did us a deal of good. In the evening, or rather afternoon, the chief of Pongah paid us a visit, shook hands all round, and tried as he did so to make out who were the missing ones. He afterwards inquired how many had died, and who they were; and on being told, shook his head in a solemn manner, as was his custom on hearing bad news, and made no reply.

About 5 o'clock in the evening we received orders to resume our tramp. For a short distance we proceeded along the beach, passing over the spot on which we had been wrecked, and having a good view of all that remained of the old *Nisero*. Her masts were still standing; portions of the poop and forecastle were still showing, the latter having slightly set in shore, giving her the appearance of being broken in two across her boiler-room. The

steering-wheel was all we could distinguish on the poop. Her midships were completely under water. The beach for a considerable distance was lined or strewn with fragments of her timber-work. In fact, the first intimation we had the night before that we were approaching Pongah was the wreckage on the sands.

Our tramp after leaving Pongah was in every way



The *Nisero*, as seen Ten Months after she got ashore.

better than we had yet experienced. Though a portion of it was through the forest along shore, the forest was not very dense, and most of the way we had a footpath. Many of us marched with bare feet, the large heavy War-Department boots being too clumsy for sandy travelling.

A delay of two hours, or nearly so, took place on our arrival at Konsaby River. Here a messenger had to be sent on for a canoe. On its arrival we were at

once shipped for our destination, accompanied by the Rajah of Kotapang-passir, this being his portion of territory. Rajah No. 2, and the chief of Pongah also went with us. Konsaby, I may here explain, is the name of the country around, and translated, means small or shallow water. Kotapang-passir is the port of the district, and lies a few miles to the north of where we then were.

We wound in and out country in a most intricate manner in the canoe, which was the largest we had ever seen. Judging from its construction, the tree from which it had been hollowed out must have been at the least seven or eight feet in diameter. We ran ashore in shallow water, and the remainder of the night's tramp was accomplished knee deep in the stream.

We arrived at our temporary resting-place about 10 o'clock. Here our eyes were regaled by the sight of a real cart, constructed after the European style. We were informed by the Rajah of Konsaby or Kotapang-passir, as I have previously called him, that it was used to transport his pepper to the coast, bullocks being yoked to it and drawing it through the rivers, which are shallow and at times void of water. This hut, though a large one, was pretty well filled by its occupants for the night, there being Rajah Apanama, the Chief of Pongah, and the Rajah of Tenom—commander-in-chief, as we termed him—and a number of followers of each, and our own company. Not being

able to get at our dry clothing, we had again to make the best of the inconvenience. The large escort which had accompanied us to the bank of the river camped out all night.

On Tuesday, the 9th of September, about 8 o'clock in the morning, breakfast, consisting of rice and curry, was served up to all hands. It had been prepared by the natives of the place. In the absence of better utensils, green banana leaves were used for plates. Our morning meal had not long been concluded, when a messenger arrived, and we were once more put on the move. We had not gone very far when a krani of the king's met us, and handed a note to the mate, from Mr. Maxwell. It being, however, four days old, that gentleman, when it was written, could not have known of the final decision of the rajahs, or of our present whereabouts. Accompanying it was a letter for the third mate, and one for Mr. Thompson, from home. This was the first letter the third mate had received since leaving Soerabaya. After a good hour's walking the country became more open as we went to the north. We arrived on the bank of the Kotapang-passir river a little before mid-day. A couple of hours had elapsed, when a note came from Mr. Maxwell, stating that he had permission for five men to return on board with him in the evening, and that we were to send them on, some of them to be Englishmen.

This we understood as intended; and four men and our third mate were selected. The messenger who brought the note, on seeing the third officer chosen, pointedly objected, and so strongly did he do so, that we were compelled to fill up his place with another of the men. They immediately left, and our little band was reduced to twelve in all. About an hour after their departure more letters arrived, one of them for me. None but those who have been in a like position—which was not an every-day one—could realize the value of these notes to the receivers.

The difference between the native women here and those of our old quarters was very striking. Here, they were of a finer and more intelligent type, and did not exhibit that fear of strangers which distinguished those we had been used to. On the other hand, they were most inquisitive, and came quite close to us, scrutinizing our persons from head to foot.

In compliance with a request of Rajah Apanama, we treated the natives to a few European songs, which whiled away the time, and evidently much pleased the strange audience, who paid marked attention during their progress, and, through Rajah Apanama, expressed themselves delighted. I may here mention that this young rajah, during our stay on Sandy Island, picked up sufficient English to hold an easy conversation with us, and showed great intelligence and anxiety for information. As in our last resting-place, the important

individuals and ourselves lay down under the one roof, only this time we were more pinched for room. The small escort still attached to our party camped out.

About 11.30 a.m., on Wednesday, the 10th of September, a messenger arrived to state that all hands were to proceed. This was the best bit of news for us we had yet received, knowing that in an hour or two we would be face to face with white men.

For a start we had to ford the river, but it not being very deep, and our hearts being light, we did not mind that. After we were through, the road became easier as we proceeded, the country, as I before said, being much more open in a northerly direction. The intense heat of the sun was now our greatest drawback. At last we came to a very open spot of land, where we once more got a view of the sea. Here we were halted for a short time, the natives forming a complete circle round us. A messenger left us at this place, and proceeded to the beach. On looking in that direction, through a small clump of trees, we could see our energetic friends, the rajah and Tuku-Yet.

On the return of the messenger we set out again, and in a few moments were being warmly, one and all, shaken by the hand by our noble friends, Mr. Maxwell, Commander Bickford, Colonel Lockhart, and Mr. Bouting. So great was the contrast to anything we had witnessed of late that I think all hands were, as it were, intoxicated with the keen joy of our situation.

Mr. Maxwell, being anxious to get us away, said,—"I think the men may proceed now, rajah."

But no! That individual said it was his custom to transact business in a formal manner.

Accordingly we were all taken before him, when he ventured a few jocular remarks to one or two of our company. Then followed a short parley between Mr. Maxwell, Rajah Tuku Imam Mouda, and Tuku-Yet, at the conclusion of which we were told that we could proceed. All hands, with the exception of myself, went round and shook hands with Tuku-Yet and his krani, Rajah Apanama, and the Rajah of Tenom. The former I would not have minded saying farewell to, but as they were all together it would have been too pointed to have passed the rajah, so in the confusion caused by the leave-taking I thought it best to quietly turn aside.

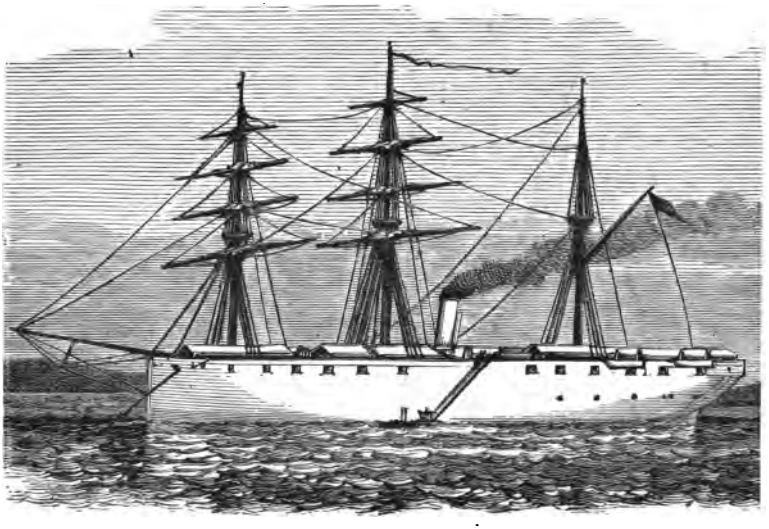
Accompanied by Commander Bickford, Colonel Lockhart, and Mr. Bouting—Mr. Maxwell remaining behind till the arrival of the money—we proceeded to the village of Kotapang passir. During this short march we had a clear view of the three men-of-war, another pleasant sight for our eyes to feast upon. The bay is small, giving some protection for anchorage, and, there being little or no surf, the place was selected for our departure, the rajah also preferring the locality to that of Bubun.

About half an hour's walk brought us to the

village, where stimulants were given to those who felt disposed. From here to where the boats of the *Pegasus* were lying, at the head of the bay, was about two miles. But this to men on the march to freedom was a small obstacle to what we had had to surmount with nothing but despair and disappointment staring us in the face. We were detained a short time in the village, Commander Bickford having gone on ahead to see after some little matter connected with the money. Presently we were again informed that all was well, and that we might proceed. No second telling was necessary. In fact I think our friends had to step out to keep up with us. At last we arrived at the head of the bay, where the boats and British tars were waiting to take us on board. All having got into the boats, the mate being the last to leave the shore, we put off for the ship.

The *Bromo*, a Dutch man-of-war, was lying closer in than the others, and we had to pass her to make our own ship. As we did so the Hollanders gave us three cheers. The mate, who left the shore in the galley, accompanied by our deliverers, went alongside the *Bromo*, and boarded her for the purpose of being presented to, and to thank, the Governor of Acheen, for his endeavours on our behalf. We proceeded direct to the *Pegasus*, where the hearty cheering and loud clapping, only to be heard from British voices and hands, met our ears. Many were the personal con-

gratulations we received from the officers and men on our gaining her deck. Shortly afterwards the mate arrived, and was received by similar demonstrations, the cheers speaking volumes for the hearts from which they came.



H.M.S. *Pegasus.*

About 4 p.m. Mr. Maxwell arrived, all safe and sound, and came on board amidst much cheering and personal congratulations from the commander and officers of the ship.

In concluding this chapter, I cannot find words to express my gratitude for the part which Mr. Maxwell,

Commander Bickford, and the officers and men of the *Pegasus* took in obtaining our release, and for their great attention and many kindnesses during our short stay on board.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

Olehleh—The Governor of Acheen—A testimonial for us—Arrival at Penang—Our quarters in the hospital—Photographed—References to the Frontispiece—Departure in the *Ajax*—Our voyage home—Conclusion.

On Wednesday, the 10th of September, Mr. Maxwell arrived on board the *Pegasus*, and immediately the anchor was weighed and we followed the Dutch vessels out to sea. The next day we arrived at Olehleh, a Dutch port on the north-west coast of the island, some miles to the south of Acheen. It had been Captain Bickford's intention to leave here in the afternoon, but the Dutch governor invited the officers of the *Pegasus* to a festive gathering of some sort in honour of the success of the allies; and as the Dutchmen had acted very cordially in the matter, the invitation was accepted.

On the Friday, the new governor of Acheen, the officer who led the expedition on our behalf at Tenom, came on board, and we had the distinguished honour of

being presented to him, and to the captain of one of the Dutch men-of-war. Both gentlemen congratulated us on our safety, and expressed themselves pleased at seeing us in better health than they had anticipated. Shortly afterwards an English gentleman came on board, bringing with him eight hundred guilders, subscribed for our benefit. These he presented to the

The General Hospital at Penang.

mate for distribution, and then favoured us with a few appropriate remarks, and ended with wishing us a safe return to England.

About daylight on Sunday, the 14th of September, we arrived off Penang, but owing to the thick, rainy weather, did not get into the berth usually occupied by the *Pegasus* until a couple of hours afterwards.

While Mr. Maxwell and Colonel Lockhart had gone ashore to see after the arrangements for our comfort, a Dutch Count, the Lieutenant of the *Linnet*, and Captain Fox, the harbour-master, came on board and congratulated us. Mr. Maxwell returned about noon, and after a few parting words from our kind friends, we embarked on the steam-launch *Rosebud*, and proceeded to the jetty, where a crowd had assembled to greet us.

We went to the governor's office to be congratulated by the acting governor, and then started in gurries for the General Hospital. Mr. Norris, the dispenser, introduced us to our lodgings in the ward of the hospital, which were very pleasantly situated, and there we received visits from a tailor, and from the Rev. Mr. Biggs, a clergyman, who read a few prayers, and offered up a thanksgiving for our deliverance. We had just finished dinner when Captain Fox and a Mr. Somerville arrived with a letter from Colonel Lockhart, expressing his regret at not being on board the *Pegasus* to take leave of us.

On the Monday we had visits from some newspaper reporters, and inserted in the local paper an acknowledgment of our gratitude for the treatment we had received on board the *Pegasus*. We were visited by Commander Bickford and Mr. Maxwell, and spent a pleasant couple of hours with Mr. and Mrs. Newbold, the latter of whom had been very kind to our second engineer

when he had been in the hospital nine months before. On the Tuesday we had a visit from a photographer,

Invalids of the *Nisero* Crew in the Hospital at Penang.

and we all had our portraits taken in the group given as the Frontispiece, which does not, however, include

the Italian sailor, who was too ill to leave the ward. The group thus consisted of:—

1. James Grant, donkey-man. 2. Martin Michelson, seaman. 3. Laurence Müller, boatswain. 4. Ah Foo, second Chinese cook. 5. Franz Jacobson, seaman. 6. James Wilson, chief engineer. 7. Charles S. Crichton, chief officer. 8. J. Thompson, purser. 9. W. Bradley, third engineer. 10. Thomas Bubb, third officer. 11. L. K. Moore, second officer. 12. John Stanton, fireman. 13. Carl Gronn, seaman. 14. Hametar Haar, seaman. 15. George Essery, first steward. 16. John Kelly, fireman. 17. Olens Holgerson, seaman.

On the Saturday it was arranged we were to go home in the *Ajax*, one of Messrs. Alfred Holt's liners, and on the Sunday the mate and chief engineer went to inspect our quarters on board of her. About noon we embarked on the *Rosebud*, and after steaming round the *Pegasus*, and giving her three cheers, in token of our gratitude for the genuine kindness we had received, and being answered with the true hearty ring, we shaped our course for the *Ajax*, and went aboard. Shortly afterwards Mr. Maxwell and Commander Bickford came to say good-bye, with many kind observations and good wishes for our future.

We weighed anchor, and the *Pegasus* dipped her ensign to us, as a parting salute; but we had not proceeded far before a squall sprang up from the westward, and rendered crossing the bar such a risky business, that the captain thought it best to wait; and we did not leave Penang until the first glimpse of dawn on Monday, the 22nd of September.

On the 27th of September we passed Point de Galle; on the 6th of October we passed Aden; and on the 11th of October we entered the Suez Canal. Ten days afterwards we cleared the Straits of Gibraltar, and on Friday, the 24th of October, when coming across the Bay of Biscay, were rather rolled about from the swell of the Atlantic. The weather, which had been beautiful ever since we left Penang, continued fine. Of course it was getting colder, and after ten months' residence almost on the line we felt the change considerably.

There is little to be recorded of our life on board the *Ajax*. All went fairly well. She was a fine ship, well manned, and skilfully handled. With one exception—that of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer *Thames*—we passed every homeward-bounder that we sighted; and that is saying a good deal for the ship and her crew.

At 11 o'clock on Saturday morning, the 25th of October, we arrived in Portland Harbour, and our eventful voyagings practically came to a close. We had left Liverpool on the 12th of June the year before. In the fifteen months we had gained the sympathy of two nations, and seen adventure enough to last us for a lifetime.

THE END.

GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, LIMITED, ST. JOHN'S SQUARE, LONDON.

MAR 19 1941